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THE LEARNED LADY IN ENGLAND

1650–1760

LADY JANE GREY

From an engraving in Edmund Lodge's *Portraits of Illustrious Personages of Great Britain*
London, 1823, Vol. II

Vassar Semi-Centennial Series

THE LEARNED LADY IN ENGLAND
1650-1760

BY

MYRA REYNOLDS
Professor of English Literature in the University of Chicago

WITH PORTRAITS

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TO

E. E. L.

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THE LEARNED LADY IN ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

LEARNED LADIES IN ENGLAND BEFORE 1650

1. Prefatory Statement

The theme to which this volume is specifically limited is the position and achievements of learned women in England in the period between 1650 and 1760. But before entering upon this detailed study it seems desirable to give a preliminary sketch of the work of learned women in England before 1650. In such a sketch it is, indeed, a temptation to go farther back along the path of history than a single volume would allow. It is difficult, for instance, to avoid some account of the women of genius notable in the great days of Greece and Rome.[1] More fascinating still would be a close study of the learned nuns of the Middle Ages.[2] St. Radegunde, Abbess of Poitiers, a poet of considerable distinction; St. Hilda, who governed her double monastery at Whitby so successfully as to put it "in the forefront of intellectual agencies in Great Britain"; the group of learned nuns who corresponded with St. Boniface, chief among them being St. Lioba, who made of her convent at Bischopsheim, Germany, "the most important educational center in that part of Europe"; Hroswitha of Gandersheim, whose seven dramas "caused the tragic muse to emerge once more from the midnight gloom of the Middle Ages";[3] St. Hildegard, "the most voluminous woman writer of the Middle Ages"; St. Herrad, author of an encyclopædic work entitled *Hortus Deliciarum*, or *Garden of Delight* — these are but a few of the

[1] Mozans, H. J.: *Woman in Science*. Chapter, "Woman's Long Struggle."

[2] For the work of these nuns see Mozans: *Woman in Science;* Eckenstein, Lina: *Woman under Monasticism.*

[3] For Hroswitha's plays see *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1896, pp. 443–50; *The English Historical Review*, July, 1888.

women whose lives and works offer a field for profitable and interesting investigation.

Emily James Putnam, in her acute study, *The Lady*, says of this convent life:

> No institution of Europe has ever won for the lady the freedom and development that she enjoyed in the convent in the early days. The modern colleges for women only feebly reproduce it, since the college for women has arisen when colleges in general are under a cloud. The lady-abbess, on the other hand, was part of the two great social forces of her time, feudalism and the Church. Great spiritual rewards and great worldly prizes were alike within her grasp. She was treated as an equal by men of her time as is witnessed by letters we still have from popes and emperors to abbesses. She had the stimulus of competition with men in executive capacity, in scholarship, and in artistic production, since her work was freely set before the general public: but she was relieved by the circumstances of her environment from the ceaseless competition in common life of woman with woman for the favor of the individual man. In the cloister of the great days, as on a small scale in the college for women to-day, women were judged by each other as men are everywhere judged by each other, for sterling qualities of head and heart and character.[1]

From mediæval poems and romances also come glimpses, tantalizingly brief and casual, to be sure, yet glimpses indicative of a tendency to count learning as one of the possible charms of a heroine.[2] The delightful lady in *Cursor Mundi*, who was described as "learnyd, ware and wise," was also said to be "of much price lovéd." A later maid, likewise of "grete prys," could vie with a modern college girl in the variety and extent of her knowledge:

> Wyse sche was and curtes of mowthe,
> All the vii arse sche cowthe.
> She had maystures at hur honde,
> The wysest men of that londe,
> And taght hur astronomye,
> Arsmetryck and gemetrye.
> That mayde was of grete prys
> For sche was bothe warre and wyse.[3]

---

[1] Putnam, Emily James: *The Lady*, p. 71.

[2] I am indebted to Miss Emma Pope for the following citations.

[3] *Guy of Warwick*, E.E.T.S., vol. 25, ll. 63 ff.

In *Floris and Blanchefleur*, Floris refused to study unless Blanchefleur was taught with him, and she prospered so at her books that her lore was a wonder to all. When she and Floris had been in school five years together, they knew Latin and could write well on parchment. When Floris went to visit his aunt she set him to learn many things, as other children did, "bot maydons and grome." [1] The wife of Sir Bevis of Hamtoun was taught "fysik and sirgerie" by great masters from Bologna.[2] Melior, the fair mistress of Partonope of Blois, since she was the only heir to the kingdom, was sent to school that she might get great wisdom. She says, "A hundred mastres I had and mo," and adds that God graciously inclined her to learning so that she came to know "the seven sciences" perfectly. She was also trained in herbs and "phisike," in "Divinite and Nygromancy." [3] Thaise, in *Apollonius of Tyre*, combined the "wisdom of a clerk" with

> every lusti werk,
> Which to a gentlewoman longeth.
>
> She was wel kept, sche was wel loked
> Sche was wel tawht, sche was wel boked
> So wel sche spedde hir in hire yowthe
> That sche of every wisdom cowthe.[4]

Medea, in Lydgate's *Troy Book*, had so passionate a desire for knowledge that she became in all the "artis called liberal" as expert and knowing as the best. She was powerful in logic, astronomy, and necromancy.[5]

But the highly prized ladies of romance, the abbesses with all their pomp and influence, the women poets, philosophers, and orators of Greece and Rome, all lose interest when compared with the story of the learned women in Italy during the Renascence. When we come to the actual flowering time of

[1] *Floris and Blanchefleur*, E.E.T.S., vol. 14, ll. 16 ff.
[2] *Sir Bevis of Hamtoun*, E.E.T.S., vols. 46–48, ll. 3671 ff.
[3] *Partonope of Blois*, E.E.T.S., vol. 109, ll. 5912 ff.
[4] Gower: *Confessio Amantis*, E.E.T.S., vol. 82 (part 2), ll. 1327 ff.
[5] Lydgate: *Troy Book*, bk. 1, ll. 1606 ff.

their genius the list is so long as to make selection difficult. "Never in history," says Mozans, "had they greater freedom of action in things of the mind; never were they, except probably in the case of the English and German abbesses of the Middle Ages, treated with more marked deference and consideration or fairness; never were their efforts more highly appreciated or more generously rewarded. . . . Everywhere the intellectual arena was open to them on the same terms as to men. Incapacity and not sex was the only bar to entrance." [1] When the great Cardinal Bembo said, "Little girls should learn Latin; it completes their charm," he was expressing the attitude of the best Italian scholars towards learning for women. Intellectual attainments were not only counted appropriate for women, but they were recognized as a distinct added attraction. Every city of importance had women whose renown was a source of civic pride. Women not only studied under tutors, but they apparently attended classes in the great universities, and even occupied important chairs in the most distinguished faculties.[2]

The outcome of a general investigation along the lines indicated would doubtless go to prove that in all civilized nations, in all ages of their progress, there have been individual women who by force of native endowment and through some favorable conjunction of circumstances, have risen into prominence in realms not ordinarily open to the women of their time, and that there have been various interesting epochs when women have responded in fairly large numbers to some exceptional intellectual stimulus.

2. Period of Henry VIII and Elizabeth

The first woman author in the English language is probably Juliana Barnes (or Berners), whose delight in hunting, hawking,

[1] Mozans: *Woman in Science,* p. 63.

[2] See Wright, Thomas: *Womankind in Western Europe;* Mozans: *Woman in Science;* Boulting, William: *Woman in Italy;* Walsh, Marie Donegan: "A City of Learned Women," *The Catholic World,* 1902; Lagno, Isadore del: *Women of Florence,* tr. by Mary G. Steegman; Putnam, Emily James: *The Lady.*

and fishing, along with a surprising amount of technical knowledge on these subjects, led her to write, in 1481, a book for "the gentill men and honest persones" whose tastes coincided with hers. But this lady was prioress of Sopewell Nunnery and comes under the list of learned nuns.[1] Genuine interest in books on the part of women in secular life in England received one of its earliest manifestations in the will of the Duchess of Buckingham who left to her daughter-in-law, Margaret, the Countess of Richmond,[2] "a book of English, being a legend of Saints; a book of French, called Lucun; another book of French, of the Epistles and Gospels; and a Primmer with clasps of silver gilt, covered with purple velvet." This legacy was an important recognition of the literary tastes of the Countess of Richmond who had, says Ballard, "a fine library stored with Latin, French and English books, not collected for ornament, or to make a figure (as is frequently the case) but for use." The Countess knew French and had some knowledge of Latin. She also entered the field of authorship, publishing before 1509 *The mirroure of golde for the sinfull soule,* "translated at Parice out of Laten into Frenshe . . . and now of late translated out of Frenshe into Englishe by the right excellent Princess Margaret." This right noble Margaret was likewise a patroness of literature and a guardian of learning. She established lectureships in divinity, maintained scholarships for poor students, founded two colleges, and in other ways manifested her interest in the progress of education.

The Countess of Richmond as a lover of books, as a translator of religious works, and particularly as an intelligent and ardent patron of learning, foreshadowed feminine activities of a later day. But the learned lady as a recognized factor in social life had no real place in England till the time of Henry VIII. Renascence ideas concerning the education of women came into England from Spain through Catherine, the first

[1] Ballard, George: *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain,* p. 5.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 9–27; Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women,* pp. 2–3. *New and General Biographical Dictionary.*

wife of Henry VIII. She was in England from 1501 to 1531. Under the influence of her mother, Queen Isabella,[1] she had been given remarkable educational advantages. Queen Isabella was interested in all that pertained to learning. She was a collector of books and contributed important accessions to Spanish libraries. She knew several modern languages and had a "critically accurate" knowledge of Latin. Learning for women was encouraged at her court. The queen had herself a lady teacher, Beatrix Galindo, who was professor of rhetoric at the University of Salamanca, and who was called, for her knowledge of the Latin language, *La Latina*. Other learned ladies of Spain were doubtless known at the court, as Francisca de Lebrixa who often took the place of her father, professor of history in the University of Alcala; or Doña Maria Pacheco de Mendoza and her sister, who are mentioned by Mr. Foster as the parallels of Sir Thomas More's daughters in England.[2] In this eager, ambitious, intellectual atmosphere the daughters of Isabella were brought up. She gave them personal instruction, and secured for them foreign teachers of eminence. Erasmus said that Catherine had been happily reared on letters from her infancy, that she loved literature, and that she was *egregie docta*. In the English court Queen Catherine's influence was all on the side of learning. Mr. Watson says that all the treatises on the education of women that appeared in England between 1523 and 1538 were under the spell of Catherine.[3] In the education of her own daughter, the Princess Mary, she kept to the traditions of the Spanish court and secured the most learned tutors for the young girl. Dr. Lynacre wrote for the child Princess a *Rudiments of Grammar*. His successor was Juan Luis Vives, who came to England in 1523 on the invitation of Henry VIII. Whether Vives actually taught the Prin-

[1] Mozans: *Woman in Science*, p. 68; Watson, *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, pp. 6–8; Prescott, W. H.: *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*, vol. II, pp. 93–194, *passim*.

[2] Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, p. 7.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 11. Mr. Watson gives a full analysis of the treatises appearing between these dates.

cess or not, he wrote, in 1523, as director of her studies, two Latin treatises, both dedicated to Queen Catherine. The first of these, *De Institutione Fœminæ Christiannæ*, was translated into English by Richard Hyrde before 1528 (though not printed till 1540) under the title, *The Instruction of a Christian Woman*. Hyrde dedicated his translation to Catherine because of her gracious zeal "to the virtuous education of the womankind of this realm." Vives's second treatise, *De Ratione Studii*, an account of the studies appropriate for a young girl, appeared in 1524, and many editions are listed. Still another treatise is by subject-matter and chronology closely connected with the two essays by Vives. In 1524 there appeared a translation by Margaret Roper of Erasmus's *Treatise on the Lord's Prayer*. The Introduction was by Mr. Hyrde, and its importance is indicated by Mr. Watson when he calls it "the first reasoned claim of the Renascence period, written in English, for the higher education of women." These treatises by Vives and Hyrde have much in common and they express the most advanced contemporary ideas on woman's education. That the place of woman is in the home is emphatically stated. Housewifery is imperative. Vives has a charming passage on the handling of wool and flax, "two crafts yet left of that old innocent world," crafts of which no woman, be she princess or queen, may be rightly ignorant.[1] Almost equal in quaint interest is his defense of the kitchen: "Nor let nobody loathe the name of the kitchen: namely, being a thing very necessary, without the which neither sick folks can amend nor whole folks live." The lady should also be mistress of a closet of medicaments which she must be able to administer with skill. Occupations that involve any sort of publicity are counted inappropriate for women, hence Vives gives "no license to a woman to be a teacher."[2] The essential feminine virtues are piety and modesty. Obedience to parents and to husbands is enjoined. This obedience, if born of inner concord, might be a voluntary and

[1] Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, p. 43.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

ideal thing. The mother of Vives is given as an example of the true wifely attitude: "My mother Blanche when she had been fifteen years married unto my father, I could never see her strive with my father. There were two sayings that she had ever in her mouth as proverbs. When she would say she believed well anything, then she used to say, even as though Luis Vives had spoken it. When she would say that she would [wished] anything, she used to say, even as though Luis Vives would it."[1] In all these points Vives and Hyrde were quite in accord with their age. The new element in their creed was that learning could make women more attractive, companionable, and efficient in these home relationships.[2] Hyrde considers the man that "had leaver have his wife a fool than a wise woman" as "worse than twice frantic." Maids must be good, says Vives, but learning will fortify them and make them more truly good. In fact, according to Vives and Hyrde, there are no bounds to be set to the learning of women except those involved in the one general prescription that all their studies must tend to the development of character. Romances, for instance, are forbidden because they give false ideals, while ethical and religious books are strongly commended.[3]

The Princess Mary was too young to know the significance of the essays in her behalf, but she profited by the training accorded her. When she was but nine she was addressed by commissioners from Holland in the Latin tongue and responded in the same language "with as much assurance and facility as if she had been twelve years of age."[4] Her parents were proud of her achievements and planned to have her learn modern languages. Later in life, at the solicitation of Queen Catherine Parr, she translated Erasmus's *Paraphrase on the Gospel of St. John*, and her work was highly praised.

[1] Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, p. 117.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 166–68. Margaret Roper is given as an illustration of the beneficial effects of learning.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 57–63, "What Books to be Read and What Not." See also pp. 203–06.

[4] *Encyclopædia Britannica* (11th ed.), under "Princess Mary."

The example set at court was followed in many noble families. There is in the realm of education no single picture more entertaining and attractive than that of Sir Thomas More and his daughters. Our knowledge of this family comes from various sources, the chief of which are a description written by Erasmus in a letter to John Faber, and the letters written by Sir Thomas to the tutors and to his daughters, especially to his daughter Margaret.[1] Sir Thomas could not see why learning was not as suitable for girls as for boys. In a letter to Gunnel he wrote:

> Neither is there anie difference in harvest time, whether it was man or woman, that sowed first the corne: for both of them beare name of a reasonable creature equally, whose nature reason only doth distinguish from bruite beastes, and therefore I do not see why learning in like manner may not equally agree with both sexes; for by it, reason is cultivated, and (as a fielde) sowed with wholesome precepts, it bringeth excellent fruit. But if the soyle of woman's braine be of its own nature bad, and apter to beare fearne then corne (by which saying manie doe terrifye women from learning) I am of opinion therefore that a woman's witt is the more diligently by good instructions and learning to be manured, to the ende, the defect of nature may be redressed by industrie.[2]

In describing the ideal wife he said: "May she be learned, if possible, or at least capable of being made so," [3] and he gave the same training to Margaret and her sisters as to his son John. The fame of these daughters went far. Symon Grinæus, in dedicating his Plato to John, speaks of the young man's sisters as those "whom a divine heat of the spirit, to the admiration and a new example of this our age, hath driven into the sea of learning so far, and so happily, that they see no learning to be above their reach, no disputation of philosophy above their

[1] See More, Cresacre: *The Life of Sir Thomas More*, first published about 1631, and edited by Reverend Joseph Hunter, 1828; Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, chap. v, "The School of Sir Thomas More"; Ballard, *Memoirs*, pp. 38–61; Manning, Anne: *The Household of Sir Thomas More;* Cannon, Mary Agnes: *Education of Women during the Renaissance.*

[2] More, Cresacre: *The Life of Sir Thomas More* (ed. 1726), p. 128.

[3] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 39.

capacity." [1] Margaret, the daughter "most like her father both in favour and wit," and "a rare woman for learning, sanctity, and secrecy," [2] was especially the source of his pride. His delight in her overflows in his charming response to a letter from her asking for money: "You aske monye, deare Megg, too shamefully and fearefully of your father, who is both desirous to giue it you, and your letter hath deserued it, which I could find in my heart to recompence, not as Alexander did by Cherilus, giuing him for every verse a Philipine of golde; but if my abilities were answerable to my will, I would bestowe two Crownes of pure golde for euery sillable thereof." [3] He found her Latin letters written in so pure a style that "Momus, his censure though never so teastie," could find no fault in them. Sir Thomas took occasion to show these letters and other compositions by Margaret to the Bishop of Exeter and to Reginald Pole, both good judges of any literary performance; and Margaret's attainments seemed to both "as a miracle." Of Mr. Pole's amazement Sir Thomas wrote:

> I could scarce make him believe, but that you had some help from your maister, until I told him seriously that you had not only never a maister in your house, but also never another man, that needed not your help rather in writing anie thing, than you needed his. In the mean time I thought with myself how true I found that now, which once I remember I spoke unto you in jeaste, when I pittied your hard happe, that men that read your writings would suspect you to have had help from some other man therein; which would derrogate somewhat from the praises due to your workes; seeing that you of all others deserve least to have such a suspition had of you, for that you never could abide to be decked with the plumes of other birds.[4]

But sweet Meg is praised because she studies for love of learning, not for fame, and contents herself with her husband and father as a sufficient audience. When Margaret married the best wish her father could make was that her children should

[1] Watson, Foster: *Vives and the Renascence Education of Women*, p. 187.
[2] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 58.
[3] More, Cresacre: *Life of Sir Thomas More* (ed. 1726), p. 138.
[4] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 43.

THE FAMILY OF SIR THOMAS MORE

Hans Holbein pinxit. W. Parsons sculp. 1815
From an engraving in *Effigies Poeticae*, London, 1824, Vol. II

be most like to herself, "except only in sex," yet he adds that a daughter who could imitate her mother's learning and virtues would be of more worth than "three boys." [1]

Margaret had three sons and two daughters and she took the same care of their education as had been taken of hers. Dr. John Morwen, a noted Greek scholar, was preceptor in Greek and Latin to her daughter Mary. Other tutors were Dr. Cole and Dr. Christopherson, also famous for Greek. Mary seems to have followed in her mother's footsteps so far as attention to learned pursuits is concerned, but without her mother's ability and charm. Her Latin orations were, however, so much admired that her tutor, Dr. Morwen, translated them into English. Sir Thomas More's other daughters, Elizabeth Dancy (b. 1509) and Cecilia Heron (b. 1510), and Margaret, a talented kinswoman who married her tutor, Dr. John Clement, in 1531, were given the same educational advantages as Margaret. A characteristic eulogy of the three sisters was by Mr. John Leland, its Latin being thus Englished in Ballard's *Memoirs:*

> Forbear too much t' extoll, great Rome, from hence,
> Thy fam'd Hortensius' Daughter's Eloquence;
> These boasted names are now eclips'd by Three
> More learned Nymphs, Great More's fair Progeny;
> Who over-pas'd the Spinster's mean Employ;
> The purest Latin Authors were their Joy;
> They loved in Rome's political Style to write.
> And with the choicest Eloquence indite,
> Nor were they conversant alone in these,
> They turn'd o'er Homer and Demosthenes;
> From Aristotle's Store of Learning too
> The mystic Art of Reasoning well they drew.
> Then blush you Men if you neglect to trace
> These Heights of Learning which the Female grace. [2]

Erasmus and Sir Thomas More were close friends and it was through this friendship that Erasmus was converted to the idea of advanced studies for women. In his *The Abbot and the*

[1] More, Cresacre: *The Life of Sir Thomas More* (ed. 1726), p. 141.
[2] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 49.

Learned Woman, Magdalia defends learning against the Abbot Antronius. The monk uses the well-worn argument that woman's place is in the home, that it is her business to conduct the affairs of the family and to instruct the children. Magdalia does not contest this position, but urges that so weighty a business needs all possible wisdom and that through books she gains wisdom. In a sharp attack on the ignorance of the monks she says: "In Spain and Italy there are not a few women belonging to the noblest families who are a match for any man. In England there are the Mores; in Germany the Pirckheimers and the Blaurers. And if you don't take care, it will soon come to this, that we shall preside in the schools of divinity, preach in the churches, and take possession of your mitres. . . . If you go on as you are doing it is more likely that the geese will begin to preach than that such dumb shepherds as you will be any longer endured." [1] Antronius is reduced to the weak argument that popular opinion does not favor Latin for women, and Magdalia closes the discussion with the classic defense of new ideas: "Why do you tell me of popular opinion, which is the worst example in the world to be followed? What have I to do with custom, that is the mistress of all evil practices? We ought to accustom ourselves to the best things, and by that means that which was uncustomary would become habitual, and that which was unpleasant would become pleasant, and that which seemed unbecoming would look graceful." [2]

The daughters of Sir Thomas More were not the only girls trained in the best learning of the day. Another important family where particular stress was laid on the education of the daughters was that of Sir Anthony Coke, one of the tutors of King Edward VI.[3] Mildred, the eldest daughter (1526–1589), who married Lord Burleigh, was celebrated for her knowledge of Latin and Greek. Two other daughters, Elizabeth, Lady

[1] Drummond, Robert B.: *Erasmus, His Life and Character*, vol. II, p. 168.

[2] Erasmus: *Select Colloquies* (edited by Merrick Whitcomb), p. 179.

[3] Ballard (*Memoirs*, pp. 180–210) gives full account of the daughters of Sir Anthony Coke; see also, Williams, Jane: *Literary Women of England;* Chalmers, Alexander: *Gen. Biog. Dict.* (ed. 1812), vol. 10.

Russel (b. *cir.* 1529), and Katharine, Mrs. Killigrew (b. *cir.* 1530), had fine natural abilities and a learned education, and were distinguished both socially and intellectually. But the most noted of the sisters was Anne (b. *cir.* 1527), who married Sir Nicholas Bacon, and became the mother of two remarkable sons, Anthony Bacon, and Francis Viscount St. Albans, the great Lord Bacon. She was said to be "exquisitely skilled in the Greek, Latin, and Italian tongues." In 1550 she translated twenty-five sermons from the Italian. In later life she did a much more important piece of translation. Bishop Jewel had written in Latin *An Apology for the Church of England.* The book had made so great a stir that an English translation seemed desirable and Lady Bacon undertook the task. She sent her translation to the Archbishop and to the author, with a letter written in Greek, that they might correct any errors, but they found it so accurate that they changed not the least word. In 1564 the Archbishop had the book published without consulting Lady Bacon because he said he knew her modesty would be abashed by any such publicity. He praised her clear translation saying that she "had done honour to her sex and to the degree of ladies." Lady Bacon was associated with her father in his duties as tutor to Edward VI. She also conducted the early education of her sons and they owed much to her wise care and great ability. Sir Anthony Coke believed that women should be educated on the same lines as men, and that they were quite as capable of acquiring knowledge, and his own daughters brilliantly sustained this theory.

A third distinguished family in which the daughters were liberally educated was that of Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. Three of them, Anne, Margaret, and Jane, were joint authors of *A Century of Distichs upon the Death of Queen Margaret of Navarre,* printed in 1550 and later translated into Greek, French, and Italian.[1] Henry Fitz Allan, Earl of Arundel, had both his daughters well trained in the classics and they had the advantage of the notable library he had collected. The eldest,

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs,* pp. 138–43.

Lady Joanna Lumley [1] (d. 1576), translated four of the *Orations* of Isocrates from Greek into Latin, and the *Iphigenia* of Euripides from Greek into English. Most of her writings were dedicated to her father. Her manuscripts were preserved in his library and so passed into royal possession in the time of James I. Another learned lady was Mary, Countess of Arundel.[2] She translated from Greek and Latin and collected a book of similes from Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, and other classic authors. She, too, dedicated her works to her father, Sir Thomas Arundel. Sir Thomas Parr, "following the example of Sir Thomas More and other great men," bestowed on his daughter Catherine [3] a learned education, as "the most valuable addition he could make to her other charms." She was interested in all matters pertaining to learning, and successfully used her influence with the King in behalf of the universities. She wrote a letter in Latin to the Princess Mary to induce her to translate Erasmus's *Paraphrase of St. John*, and wrote many psalms, prayers, and meditations, beside *Queene Katherine Parre's lamentation of a sinner*, published in 1548. Jane, Countess of Westmoreland, was placed by her father, the Earl of Surrey, under the tuition of Mr. Fox, the Martyrologist, who reported her skill in Latin and Greek as such "that she might well stand in competition with the greatest men of that age." [4]

Most interesting and most pathetic of all the young women known for learning in Tudor times was Lady Jane Grey.[5] Ascham, in a well-known passage in *The Scholemaster* (1570), describes an interview he had with her at Bradgate where she was pursuing her studies under John Aylmer, her tutor. This was in 1550 when Lady Jane was but thirteen.

> Before I went into *Germanie*, I came to Brodegate in Le(i)cestershire, to take my leaue of that noble Ladie *Iane Grey*, to whom I was exeding moch beholdinge. Hir parentes, the Duke and Duches, with all the houshold, Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, were huntinge in the

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[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, pp. 121–23.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 120.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 79–97.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 145.
[5] Ascham: *Scholemaster*, bk. I, no. 7; Ballard: *Memoirs*, pp. 98–118.

Parke; I founde her, in her Chamber, readinge *Phædon Platonis* in Greeke, and that with as moch delite, as som ientlemen wold read a merie tale in *Bocase*. After salutation, and dewtie done, with som other taulke, I asked her, whie she wold leese soch pastime in the Parke! smiling she answered me; I wisse, all their sporte in the Parke is but a shoadoe to that pleasure, that I find in *Plato:* Alas good folke, they neuer felt what trewe pleasure ment. And howe came you Madame, quoth I, to this deepe knowledge of pleasure, and what did chieflie allure you vnto it: seinge, not many women, but verie fewe men haue attained thereunto. I will tell you, quoth she, and to tell you a troth, which perchance ye will meruell at. One of the greatest benefites, that euer God gaue me, is, that he sent me so sharpe and seuere Parentes, and so ientle a scholemaster. For when I am in the presence of either father or mother, whether I speake, kepe silence, sit, stand, or go, eate, drinke, be merie, or sad, be sowyng, plaiyng, dauncing, or doing anie thing els, I most do it, as it were, in soch weight, mesure, and number, euen so perfitelie, as God made the world, or else I am so sharplie taunted, so cruellie threatened, yea presentlie some tymes with pinches, nippes, and bobbes, and other waies, which I will not name, for the honor I bear them, so without measure misordered, that I think my selfe in hell, till tyme cum, that I must go to *M. Elmer*, who teacheth me so ientlie, so pleasantlie, with soch faire allurements to learning, that I thinke all the tyme nothing, whiles I am with him. And when I am called from him, I fall on weeping because, what soeuer I do els, but learning, is ful of grief, trouble, feare, and whole misliking unto me: And thus my booke, hath bene so moch my pleasure, and bringeth dayly to me more pleasure and more, that in respect of it, all other pleasures, in vere deede be but trifles and troubles vnto me. I remember this talke gladly, bothe bicause it is so worthy of memorie, and bicause also, it was the last talke that euer I had, and the last tyme, that euer I saw that noble and worthie Ladie.

Mr. Elmer said she understood perfectly both kinds of philosophy, and could express herself very properly at least in the Latin and Greek tongues. Sir Thomas Chaloner said that she was "well versed in Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, French and Italian," that she "played well on instrumental music, writ a curious hand, and was excellent at her Needle." Ballard quotes a contemporaneous opinion that she was superior to King Edward VI in learning and in the languages. "If her fortunes [says he] had been as good as her bringing up, joyned

with fineness of wit: undoubtedly she might have seemed comparable not only to the house of the Vespasians, Sempronians, and mother of the Gracchies; yea, to any other women besides that deserveth high praise for their singular learning; but also to the university men, which have taken many degrees of the Schools."

So far as accessible records go it was only in royal or noble families that a learned education was counted suitable for women. It is rare indeed to come upon an account like that of Elizabeth Lucar (1510–1537), the daughter of a Mr. Paul Withypoll, and the wife of a merchant-tailor, Mr. Lucar. In her accomplishments she seems to have vied with the best ladies in the land. She was excellent in music, being able to play on the viol, the lute, and the virginal, and she could sing in various tongues.

> She wrought all Needle-works that Women exercise,
> With Pen, Frame, or Stoole, all Pictures artificial,
> Curious Knots, or Trailes, what fancy could devise,
> Beasts, Birds, or Flowers, even as things natural.

She wrote "three manner hands," was especially cunning in accounts and "Algorism" (Arithmetic), and she could speak, write, and read Latin, Spanish, and Italian, and she "won the garland" in English.[1] Our knowledge of Elizabeth Withypoll's rare attainments comes by chance from the information on her monument. Probably there were other highly educated women in the wealthy middle classes but their learned tastes were not counted worthy of any definite record.

In addition to the many instances of girls trained in the best learning of their times during the first half of the sixteenth century, we have striking contemporary testimony as to the prevalence of the custom, and the high esteem in which such learning was held. Richard Mulcaster (1530–1611), first head-master of a school founded by the Merchant Taylors' Company in 1561, in discussing principles of education, expressed advanced ideas

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 36.

concerning the ability and training of girls.[1] He declared himself "for them toothe and naile." He says that their "natural towardnesse" is such that they should be well brought up, and he summarizes the elements of this training. A young gentlewoman is thoroughly educated, he says, if she can "reade plainly, and distinctly, write faire and swiftly, sing cleare and sweetly, play wel and finely, understand and speak the learned languages, and the tongues also which the time most embraseth with some logicall helpe to chop, and some rhetoricke to brave." And he asks whether it is likely that the children of a woman so trained will be "eare a whit the worse brought up" for this learning. The places wherein girls may study may be at home with tutors or they may go forth to the elementary school. And the teacher may be either a man or a woman. Mulcaster was himself in favor of sending girls to the public grammar schools, and even to the universities, but he said it was "a thing not used" in his country, there was no "president" therefor. But he is enthusiastic about the attainments of women. In languages, he says, "they compare favourably with our kinde in the best degree." Some of them are so excellently trained and so rarely qualified that they could be preferred to "the best Romaine or Greekish paragones be they never so much praised: to the Germaine or French gentlewymen by late writers so wel liked: to the Italian ladies who dare write themselves and deserve fame for so doing."

Nicholas Udall, in 1548, in a Preface to Princess Mary's translation of the *Paraphrase of the Gospel of St. John* by Erasmus, comments on the great number of noble women at that time in England given not only to human sciences and strange tongues, but

> also so throughly expert in the Holy Scriptures that they were able to compare with the best writers as well in enditeing and penning of Godly and fruitful treatises to the instruction and edifying of realmes in the knowledge of God, as also in translating good books out of Latin or Greek into English. . . . It was now no news in England to see young

[1] Mulcaster, Richard: *Positions*, chap. 38.

damsels in noble houses and in the courts of princes, instead of cards and other instruments of idle trifling, to have continually in their hands either psalms, homilies, or other devout meditations . . . and as familiarly both to read or reason thereof in Greek, Latin, French or Italian, as in English. It was now a common thing to see young virgins so trained in the study of good letters, that they willingly set all other vain pastimes at naught for learning sake. It was now no news at all, to see Queens and ladies of most high estate and progeny, instead of courtly dalliance, to embrace virtuous exercises of reading and writing, and with most earnest study both early and late, to apply themselves to the acquiring of knowledge.[1]

Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), indicates the prevalence of women poets in the sixteenth century when he says:

Darke word or doubtfull speach are not so narrowly to be looked vpon in a large poeme, nor specially in the pretie Poesies and deuises of Ladies and Gentlewomen-makers, whom we would not haue too precise Poets least with their shrewd wits, when they were maried they might become a little too fantasticall wiues.[2]

One of the influential foreign books of the first half of the sixteenth century was Baldasar Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*, written in 1514, published in 1528, and translated into English in 1561 by Thomas Hoby. The book is a conversation supposed to take place in the drawing-room of the Duchess of Urbino, with the Duchess, her friend Emilia Pia, Pietro Bembo, Bernardo Bibbiena, Giuliano de Medici, and others, among the speakers. In the chapter on the attributes of the perfect Court Lady, Count Gaspar Pallavicino says, "Since you have given women letters and continence and magnanimity and temperance I only marvel that you would not have them govern cities, make laws, and lead armies, and let the men stay at home to cook or spin." [3] Giuliano de Medici replies, laughing, "Perhaps even that would not be amiss." There follows a discussion of woman as essentially imperfect, an accident or mistake of na-

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 127.
[2] Puttenham, George: *The Arte of English Poesie*, lib. III, chap. XXI.
[3] Translation of *Cortegiano* by L. E. Opdyke (1903), bk. III, p. 172.

ture, and consequently of less dignity than men and not capable of those virtues to which men attain. But the Magnifico held the doctrine that physical weakness does not constitute inferiority, and that mentally women are equal to men: "All the things that men can understand the same can women understand too; and where the intellect of the one penetrates there also can that of the other penetrate."

It is but natural that the praise of learning for women should extend through the reign of Elizabeth. The Queen herself was an admirable linguist. She spoke and wrote Latin with ease; she was a student of Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon; and she made translations into English from French and Italian, even translating from Latin into Greek. According to Ascham she read more Greek every day than some Prebendaries read Latin in a week, and bestowed more regular hours on learning than six of the best given gentlemen in the court. It was also in accordance with the ideals of the age that the Queen should wish to shine as a poetess. Dyce, in his *Specimens of British Poetesses*, says that except for the speech of the Chorus in the *Hercules Acteus* of Seneca (printed in Park's edition of Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*) he gives, and for the first time in collected form, all the poems by this "Flower of Troynovant." It is all occasional verse, such as a sonnet on that lovely "daughter of debate," Mary Queen of Scots, a *Rebus*, an *Epitaph*, and a few other stanzas. One little poem beginning

I grieve but dare not show my discontent,

with much that is conventional in expression, seems yet to have a genuine note of personal feeling. Taken as a whole the brief sum of the Queen's verse indicates no poetic aptitude. It merely goes to show that verse writing was counted an agreeable accomplishment, and one to be cultivated by a queen.

Probably the most highly gifted woman during Elizabeth's reign was Jane Weston (1582–1612).[1] And she was of high repute. When Evelyn went to dine with Lord Cornbury at Clar-

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, pp. 243–47.

endon House (December 20, 1668) to see the new house "now bravely furnished, especially with the pictures of most of our ancient and modern wits, poets, philosophers, famous and learned Englishmen," he greatly commended his lordship's collection, but suggested additional names of the learned. Among these new names were Lady Jane Grey and Elizabeth Jane Weston. In *Numismata* Evelyn praised Jane Weston's Latin poem on typography. Farnaby "ranked her with Sir Thomas More and the best Latin poets of the day." She was reputed to speak and write English, Greek, German, Latin, Italian and Czech. John Philips praised her in his *Theatrum Poetarum.* "Weston's fair daughter," "the tenth muse," "the fourth grace," received, indeed, very high contemporary English recognition, and even more extravagant praise came from foreign critics. Her collected works were published in 1602 by Georg Martin von Baldhoven at his own cost. At the end of the book there was a list of learned women beginning with Deborah and ending with Elizabeth Weston.

The only woman before 1603 in Aubrey's *Lives*, besides the Countess of Pembroke, was Elizabeth Danvers. His notes on her are: "A great politician; great witt and spirit, but revengefull. Knew how to manage her estate as well as any man; understood jewells as well as any jeweller." He calls her "an Italian," probably because she understood that language, and he says "she had prodigious parts for a woman." Her learning was certainly unusual, for "she had Chaucer at her fingers' ends." The only date given for her is 1568, the year in which her son, Sir Charles Danvers, was born.[1]

To show that Scotland was not unrepresented, mention may be made of Elizabeth Melville, supposed to be identical with Elizabeth Colville, Lady Colville of Culross. In 1599 Alexander Hume dedicated to her his *Hymns, or Sacred Songs*, and he says of her: "I know ye delite in poesie yourselfe; and as I vnfainedly confes, excelles any of your sexe in that art, that ever I heard within this nation. I have seene your compositions so copious,

[1] Aubrey: *Brief Lives*, vol. I, p. 193.

so pregnant, so spirituall, that I doubt not but it is the gift of God in you." [1] The one poem by which she is known, *Ane Godlie Dreame compylit in Scottish Meter by M. M. (Mistress Melville) Gentlewoman in Culross, at the request of her freindes,* was published in 1603. It appeared again in a volume of *Various Poetry* in 1644, and in David Laing's *Early Metrical Tales* in 1826. Dyce gives a few stanzas in his *Specimens.* The poem is a Bunyan-like narrative in which the horrors of hell are painted with a vigorous brush. In fact hell is made so distinct that even the mitigating and finally saving presence of Christ as guide can hardly soften the pictures of "puir damnit saullis . . . frying wonder fast in flaming fire." [2]

The one lady of Elizabethan days whose fame justly exceeds that of any of her predecessors is Mary Sidney (1561–1621),[3] sister of Sir Philip Sidney. At sixteen she married Henry Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and the twenty-four years of her married life were passed at his estate, Wilton House, in Wiltshire. Her brother Philip was often at Wilton and her more important literary accomplishments are closely bound up with his work. It was at Wilton that he wrote *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* which he dedicated to his "dear ladie and sister." The brother and sister translated together the whole book of Psalms into English verse. Psalms 44–150 are attributed to Lady Pembroke. In 1592 she published two translations from the French, Du Plessis Mournay's *Le Excellent Discours de la Vie et de la Mort;* and Robert Garnier's *Marc Antonie,* a tragedy. Before 1600 she had also translated *The Triumph of Death* from the Italian. In 1593 she brought out her brother's *Arcadia* on which she had done most careful editorial work. She had also a taste for science. Aubrey, in his *Brief Lives,* says of her: "She was a great chymist, and spent yearly a

[1] Scottish Text Society, 1902, p. 4.

[2] *Notes and Queries,* 2d Series, vol. VIII, pp. 247, 312.

[3] Ballard: *Memoirs,* pp. 259–66; Young, Francis Berkeley: *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke.* (Full and discriminating account of Lady Pembroke as patroness and author.)

great deale in that study.[1] She kept for her laborator in the house Adrian Gilbert (vulgarly called Dr. Gilbert), half brother to Sir Walter Ralegh, who was a great chymist in those dayes. . . . She also gave an honourable pension to Dr. Thomas Mouffett, who hath writ a booke *De insectis*. Also one . . . Boston, a good chymist . . . who did undoe himself by studying the philosopher's stone."

But while Lady Pembroke takes undoubtedly a high rank as translator and editor, her fame does not rest chiefly on this work. When Nicholas Breton compared her to the Duchess of Urbino he brought forward her essential claim to distinction, which is that she understood, valued, and befriended the literati of her day. Aubrey says: "In her time Wilton House was like a College, there were so many learned and ingeniose persons. She was the greatest patronesse of witt and learning of any lady in her time." The most extravagant eulogies were addressed to her from girlhood to old age. No such chorus of praise had been accorded any other woman except the queen. But it must be noted that this adulation is mainly for Lady Pembroke as the patroness of letters. Only incidentally are her own scholastic attainments commended. It was as a lover of wit and learning, as a dispenser of favors, that Lady Pembroke, the typical great lady of Elizabethan days, expressed her interest in learning, rather than as herself a scholar; and it was as an intelligent and open-handed patroness that she received highest recognition.

Wotton, about a century later, gives the following summary of the learning of this period: "It was so very modish, that the fair Sex seemed to believe that *Greek* and *Latin* added to their Charms: and *Plato* and *Aristotle* untranslated, were frequent ornaments of their Closets. One would think by the Effects, that it was a proper Way of Educating of them, since there are no Accounts in History of so many truly great Women in any one age, as are to be found between the years 15 and 1600." [2]

[1] The only record of Lady Pembroke's scientific tastes. Aubrey's testimony is, unfortunately, not entirely to be relied on. [Young: *Mary Sidney*, p. 154.]

[2] Wotton, William: *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*, p. 349.

MARY SIDNEY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE

From an engraving in Horace Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, London, 1806

Though Wotton counts the century as one period, a closer study of dates shows that most of the learned women of the century belong in the first half of it, or at least obtained their education in the first half of it. The woman most noted for classical attainments during Elizabeth's reign was Lady Bacon. Her sisters also were of considerable importance intellectually, and they lived well into the reign of Elizabeth. But their education and their establishment as women of exceptional learning belong before the coming of Elizabeth to the throne.

Miss Weston's learning is unquestioned, but it can hardly be credited to England. She lived much abroad, her works were published in Holland, and the praise accorded her in England was but an echo of the eulogies uttered by foreign critics. In spite of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Mary Sidney, and Lady Bacon and Jane Weston, it becomes apparent by a study of dates and names that there were in Elizabeth's reign fewer eulogies of liberal education for girls and fewer records of women distinguished by learning than in the preceding period. In point of fact, when we speak of the sixteenth century as a century of learned women, the emphasis should be on the first sixty years of the century.

3. Period from 1603 to 1650

With the death of Elizabeth we come practically to the end of the favor accorded learned women. The changed tone of public opinion may be fairly indicated by a few scattered utterances from contemporary poems and essays.

Sir Thomas Overbury, in his *Characters* (1614), describes "A Good Woman" as one "whose husband's welfare is the business of her actions." Her chief virtue is that "Shee is Hee." In *A Wife* he says that "Books are a part of Man's Prerogative." He praises a "passive understanding" in women and deprecates learning since

> What it finds malleable it maketh frail
> And doth not add more ballast, but more sail.

Powell, in *Tom of All Trades* (1631), is emphatic in his plea for

the domestic as against the learned lady: "Let them learne plaine workes of all kinds, so they take heed of too open seaming. Instead of Song and Musicke, let them learn Cookerie and Laundrie. And instead of reading in *Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia*, let them reade the grounds of good huswifery. I like not a female Poetresse at any hand." [1] William Habington, in *Castara* (1634), a series of poems in honor of Lucy Herbert, his wife, gave a comprehensive description of the ideal wife's attitude towards her husband: "Shee is inquisitive onely of new wayes to please him, and her wit sayles by no other compass then that of his direction. Shee lookes upon him as Conjurers upon the Circle, beyond which there is nothing but Death and Hell; and in him shee beleeves Paradice circumscrib'd. His vertues are her wonder and imitation; and his errors, her credulitie thinkes no more frailtie, then makes him descend to the title of Man." [2] Richard Brathwait, in *The English Gentleman*, comments with apparent approval on the ancient seclusion of women. He says, "*The Ægyptians*, by an especiall decree (as *Plutarch* reports) injoined their Women to weare no shooes, because they should abide at home. The *Grecians* accustomed to burne, before the doore of the new married, the axletree of that coach, wherein she was brought to her husbands house, letting her understand that she was ever after to dwell there." [3]

Sir Ralph Verney said of his own daughter: "Pegg is very backward. . . . I doubt not but she will be schollar enough for a Woeman." With regard to little Nancy Denton he wrote: "Let not your girl learn Latin nor short hand: The difficulty of the first may keep her from that vice, for soe I must esteem it in a woeman; but the easinesse of the other may be a prejudice to her; for the pride of taking sermon noates hath made multitudes of women unfortunate." Miss Nancy was quite in advance of her godfather in her conception of the studies

[1] New Shakspere Society Series, vol. VI, p. 173.
[2] Habington, William: *Castara*, Preface to "The Second Part."
[3] Brathwait, Richard: *The English Gentleman* (ed. 1633), p. 264.

appropriate for her. She wrote to him: "I know you and my coussenes wil out rech me in french, but i am a goeng whaar i hop i shal out rech you in ebri grek and laten." Sir Ralph answered: "I did not think you had been guilty of soe much learning as I see you are; and yet it seems you rest unsatisfied or else you would not threaten Lattin, Greeke, and Hebrew too. Good sweet harte bee not soe covitous; beleeve me a Bible (with y^e^ Common prayer) and a good plaine cattichisme in your mother tongue being well read and practised, is well worth all the rest and much more sutable to your sex; I know your Father thinks thise false doctrine, but be confident your husband will bee of my oppinion. In French you can not be too cunning for that language affords many admirable books fit for you as Romances, Plays, Poetry, Stories of illustrious (not learned) Woemen, receipts for preserving, makinge creames and all sorts of cookeryes, ordring your gardens and in Breif, all manner of good housewifery." [1]

The general opinion was quite in accord with Luther when he said: "Women should remain at home, sit still, keep house, and bear and bring up children"; [2] or, at the best, with Milton's "He for God only, she for God in him." [3]

Mr. Baldwyn, it is true, in 1619, in his *New Help to Discourse*, praises England as the place where women had the greatest prerogatives. In England, he says, women "are not kept so severely submiss" as in France, nor so jealously guarded as in Italy. "England is termed by foreigners the Paradise of Women as it is by some accounted the Hell of horses and the Purgatory of Servants. And it is a common byword among the Italians that if there were a bridge built over the narrow seas all women in Europe would run into England." [4] But this favorable

[1] *Memoirs of the Verney Family*, vol. III, pp. 72–74.

[2] Luther, Martin: *Table Talk* (edited by William Hazlitt), no. DCCXXV.

[3] Milton, John: *Paradise Lost*, bk. IV, 299.

[4] *Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, vol. IV, p. 195. For many years the superior advantages accorded English women was a stock subject of national self-congratulation. In the light of this fact we read with interest a comment by De Segur in 1803: "The English women live much in the same manner as those

opinion must be discounted as being a retrospective estimate based mainly on the attitude towards women in the sixteenth century; and further, as being an Englishman's attempt to exalt English as against continental customs.

Of more curious interest is the ingenious attempt of the Bishop of London to interpret the account of the creation of Eve from Adam's rib as an intention on the part of the Creator to teach the equality of woman with man. The Bishop says: "The species of this bone is exprest to be *costa*, a rib, a bone of the side, not of the head: a woman is not *domina*, the ruler; nor of any anterior part; she is not *prælata*, preferred before the man; nor a bone of the foote; she is not *serva*, a handmaid; nor of any hinder part; she is not *post-posita*, set behind the man; but a bone of the *side*, of a middle and indifferent part, to show that she is *socia*, a companion to her husband. For *qui jungunter lateribus, socii sunt*, they that walke side to side, cheeke to cheeke, walke as companions." [1]

One book definitely in honor of the ladies came out rather late in the period. This was Charles Gerbier's *Elogium Heroinum. The Ladies' Vindication: or, The Praise of Worthy Women.* The threefold dedication to the Princess of Bohemia, "whose marvellous wisdom and profound knowledge in Arts, Sciences, and Languages, is admired by all men," to the Countess Dowager of Claire, "a Patroness of the Muses, a general Lover of the Languages, and Knowledge"; and to the "Vertuous Accomplisht Lady Anne Hudson," is justified by the three principles in natural philosophy, the three theological virtues, and

of Turkey, with the exception of walls and keepers. Without being so much overlooked, they suffer equal constraint. However great the superiority they may be sensible they possess above their husbands, they are obliged to respect and to fear them; and they endeavor to acquire their love as a matter of necessity. Such is also the lesson they give to their children, and it may be remarked that they recommend it to them rather as a political measure than as a duty. In fact, they can command only by obeying; and when it is said that a woman is happier in England than in any other country, it is only saying that she is prepared, by her education, to be more satisfied than another woman with a mediocrity of happiness." (Hill, Georgiana: *Women in English Life*, vol. II, p. 89.)

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vol. II, p. 214.

the three graces. "Woman," says Mr. Gerbier, "is capable of as high improvement as man," an assertion which he proceeds to establish by the following arguments: "Does not *Sophia* signify wisdom? Are not Faith, Hope and Charity represented as Women? Are not the Seven Liberal Arts exprest in Women's Shapes? Are not the Nine Muses Daughters of Jupiter? Is not Wisdom called the Daughter of the Highest?" His list of worthy women begins with the Queen of Sheba who disputed with Solomon, goes enthusiastically through the famous dames of Greece and Rome, including the Muses and the Sibyls, and touches upon later learned women such as "Christine de Pisan, Margaret of Vallois, Lady Jane Grey, the Countess of Pembroke, the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke," and a few other outstanding personages of Tudor times. Praise so heterogeneous and uncritical was perhaps of little value, but such as it is, it stands alone in England in the period between Elizabeth and Charles II as a defense of learned women. And no defense or protest comes from the pen of a woman.

It should, however, be noted that in European countries women were more vitally concerned in their own destinies. Between 1600 and 1641 there appeared at least three significant books by women dealing with the intellectual emancipation of their sex. The earliest of these came from Italy in 1608 with a second edition in 1621. It was written by a young Venetian widow, Lucrecia Marinelli (1571–1653), and was entitled *Della notabilità e della eccellenza delle donne e dei difetti degli uomini.* A second and better known book was by Marie de Jars, the *fille d'alliance* of Montaigne, usually known as Mlle. de Gournay.[1] Her book, entitled *L'Egalité des Hommes et des Femmes,* appeared in 1604 when "the Pride of Gournay," "the French Siren," as she was called, had become well known in the cultivated circles of Paris through her definitive edition of Montaigne's works in 1595. Mlle. de Gournay's thesis as

[1] See Schiff, Mario: *La Fille d'alliance de Montaigne : Marie de Gournay.* (An account of her life; a list of her works; her two essays in defense of women, and an account of her relations with Anna van Schurman. Reviewed in *Modern Language Notes,* 1911.)

to the dignity and capacity of women is established by divine authority and by citations from the church fathers and ancient philosophers. She follows up these expressions of opinion by a thorough résumé from sacred and profane history of the women who have worthily held high places. M. Feugère [1] voices what must be the opinion of any modern reader when he says that *L'Egalité* would be *plus piquant* without the pedantic form in which it is cast, without *les citations fréquentes et les raisonnements scholastiques qui le surchargent.* But however cumbersome we may find her method, it apparently suited her public, for the book was enthusiastically received.

The third and by far the most important book on the position and desirable training of women was by Anna van Schurman of Utrecht. The extremes to which Mlle. de Gournay carried her doctrines were distasteful to Anna van Schurman, yet many of her ideas were doubtless based on the work of her French predecessor, *la mère du féminisme moderne.* Anna van Schurman's book was translated into English and had a direct influence on the progress of English educational ideals for women. It is taken up in detail later in this discussion.

The low estimate of learning, in the first half of the seventeenth century, as an appropriate pursuit for women, had as its natural outcome a great decrease in the number of women who devoted themselves to any form of scholarship. The names that remain to us from this period as in any way connected with literature or learning form a singularly inchoate list, interesting, for the most part, because of the oddities it represents rather than because of any solid achievements. Of considerable importance are several ladies in the early years of the Stuarts who followed in the footsteps of Lady Pembroke as patronesses of learning. The first of these was Lady Bedford, who held her "graceful and brilliant little court" at Twickenham Park between 1608 and 1618. Daniel, Drayton, Donne, and Jonson were among those who celebrated her mu-

[1] Feugère, Leon: *Les femmes poètes au XVI^e siècle.*

nificence. Though Lady Bedford wrote verses she had no pronounced literary pursuits of her own. Her "considerable and varied learning" went preferably along antiquarian and horticultural lines. She collected medals and pictures, and she designed a garden highly praised by Sir William Temple. She is of importance chiefly because, in an age when learning lived only as it found patrons, she was magnificent in her hospitality to the poets.[1] Lady Mary Wroth was a niece of Lady Pembroke and carried on the traditional family attitude towards poets. Jonson's *Alchemist* (1610) was dedicated to her, and Chapman's *Iliad* (1614) had a prefatory sonnet addressed to her. She wrote *The Countess of Montgomerie's Urania* (1621), in four books, a work modeled on her uncle's *Arcadia.* A third patroness was Elizabeth Spencer, wife of Sir George Carey. She was a kinswoman of Edmund Spenser and he commemorated her for "the excellent favors" she had granted him.

One of the most notable young women of the time of James I was Elizabeth Jocelyn (1596–1622). She was brought up by her grandfather, William Chaderton, Bishop of Lincoln. He was a friend of Sir Anthony Coke and Lord Burleigh and naturally shared their ideas as to education. The quick wit and remarkable memory of this little granddaughter greatly pleased him and he took the utmost pains with her education, training her carefully in "languages, history, and some arts," but principally in "studies of piety." She died nine days after the birth of her first child to whom she left *The Mother's Legacie to her Unborne Childe.* The third edition came out in 1625, an incorrect impression in 1684, and a reprint of the 1625 edition in 1852.[2] The little book contains a letter to her husband in which she indicates her wishes in case the child should be a girl:

[1] Thomas: *Feminine Influence on the Poets*, pp. 335–40.

[2] This edition, brought out by Messrs. Blackwood, "is accompanied by a long preface or dissertation containing many particulars relating to the authoress and her relatives, and to a number of ladies of high station and polished education, who, during the period intervening between the Reformation in England and the Revolution in 1688, distinguished themselves by publishing works characterized by exalted piety and refined taste." (*Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vol. IV, p. 410.) I have not had access to this edition.

I desire her bringing up to bee learning the Bible, as my sisters doe, good housewifery, writing and good workes: other learning a woman needs not; though I admire it in those whom God hath blest with discretion, yet I desired not so much in my owne, having seene that sometimes women have greater portions of learning than wisdome, which is of no better use to them than a main saile to a flye-boat, which runs under water. But where learning and wisdom meet in a vertuous disposed woman, she is the fittest closet of all goodnesse. She is, indeed, I should but shame myself, if I should goe about to praise her more. But, my dear, though she have all this in her, she will hardly make a poore man's wife: Yet I leave it to thy will. If thou desirest a learned daughter, I pray God give her a wise and religious heart, that she may use it to his glory, thy comfort, and her owne salvation.

Nearly all of the book is given up to cautions and plans for a boy's education. And for boy or girl there is great emphasis on religion, on attending services, reading the Bible, and keeping up habits of daily devotion. Of the prayers definitely recommended, one for morning is one hundred and eighty lines, and one suitable for all times is three hundred and fifty-nine lines. In the brief portion addressed directly to the girl, "Devout Anna, Just Elizabeth, Religious Ester, and Chaste Susanna" are held up as exemplars. Self-effacement seems the chief duty enjoined on the girl: "If thou beest a Daughter, remember thou art a Maid, and such ought thy modesty to bee, that thou shouldst scarce speak, but when thou answerest." The book was deservedly popular because it was so genuine in its forecast of sorrow, so pathetically eager in plans and hopes for her husband and child. No other work so personal and human in its appeal comes to light in this period.

There are during the first half of the century a few books by women on practical subjects. They could hardly take rank as learned productions, but they are significant as early attempts on the part of women to put into some sort of readable form, and to print for the instruction of other women, the wisdom garnered through years of experience. One of these books appeared in 1628 and was entitled *The Countess of Lincoln's*

Nurserie.[1] The Countess was the mother of seven sons and nine daughters and wrote this little treatise particularly for the guidance of her daughter-in-law Bridget. It is described as "a well-wrote piece full of fine arguments, and capable of convincing anyone that is capable of conviction, of the necessity and advantages of mothers nursing their children." A second book transmitted information of another sort. Before 1651 Elizabeth Grey, Countess of Kent (1581–1651), the granddaughter of Bess of Hardwick, wrote or compiled *A Choice Manuall, or Rare and Select Receipts in Physick and Chyrurgery*. A second part, entitled *A True Gentlewoman's Delight Wherein is contained all manner of Cookery*, reached its nineteenth edition in 1687. *The Legacie*, the *Nurserie*, the *Choice Manuall*, were the direct outcome of interests considered appropriate for women, and such publicity as they involved would not be challenged.

Letter-writing is also a realm ascribed without question to women, and when chance has rescued from oblivion any group of their letters, social history has been thereby enriched. The earliest Englishwoman, any large number of whose letters have been preserved and published, is Lady Brilliana Harley (1600–43) who wrote to her son Edward while he was at Oxford in the years 1638–40. She was a woman of pronounced religious and political opinions, observant, domestic, and with a ready pen for picturesque detail, and her letters are of more interest than most of the contemporary published work.[2]

A few women have more directly to do with learning than those already mentioned. Occasionally in some great family Tudor traditions were maintained. Margaret, Countess of Cumberland (1560–1616), for instance, held to the idea that maidens of noble houses must be nobly educated, and she induced the poet Daniel to live at Skipton Castle as tutor to Anne, her nine-year-old daughter. Bishop Rainbow, who knew the family well, gives the following account of Anne:

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, pp. 265–66.

[2] Two hundred and five letters published by The Camden Society in 1854.

She could discourse with virtuoso's, travellers, scholars, merchants, divines, statesmen, and with good housewives in any kind: insomuch that a prime and elegant wit, Dr. Donne, well seen in all human learning . . . is reported to have said of this lady, in her younger years to this effect; that she knew well how to discourse of all things from predestination to slea-silk. Meaning that although she was skilful in her housewifery, and such things in which women are conversant, yet her penetrating wit soared up to pry into the highest mysteries, looking at the highest example of female wisdom. Although she knew *Wool* and *Flax*, fine *Linen* and *Silk*, things appertaining to the spindle and the distaff: *yet she could open her mouth with wisdom.* . . . If she had sought fame rather than wisdom, possibly she might have been ranked among those wise and learned of her sex, of whom *Pythagoras* or *Plutarch*, or any of the ancients have made such honourable mention.[1]

A portrait of Anne at thirteen represents the books supposedly read by her under her tutor, Mr. Daniel, and her governess, Mrs. Ann Taylor, whose heads appear in the picture. The books are "Eusebius, St. Augustine, Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, Godfrey of Boulogne, The French Academy, Cambden, Ortelius, and Agrippa on the Vanity of Occult Sciences." [2]

At nineteen Anne married the Earl of Dorset. Her second marriage, in middle life, was to Philip Herbert, Fourth Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. In alliance with these noble houses she was extremely unhappy. In her Journal she says: "The marble pillars of Knowle in Kent and Wilton in Wiltshire, were to me often times but the gay arbor of anguish. A wise man, that knew the insides of my fortune, would often say, that I lived in both these my lords' great families as the river Roan runs through the lake of Geneva, without mingling its streams with the lake; for I gave myself up to retiredness as much as I could and made good books and virtuous thoughts my companions." [3] A portrait, belonging to this period of middle life, indicates as the books then most favored, "the Bible,

[1] *Biographium Femineum*, vol. II, p. 193. From Funeral Sermon by Bishop Rainbow on the text, "Every wise woman buildeth her house" (Proverbs XIV, 1); Coleridge, Hartley: *Worthies of Yorkshire and Lancashire*, p. 291.

[2] Mr. Pennant's *Tour in Scotland* (ed. 1790), part II, pp. 355–62.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 360.

ANNE CLIFFORD, COUNTESS OF DORSET, PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY

From an engraving in Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*, 1790, Part II

Charron on Wisdom and pious treatises." Lady Pembroke's pursuit of abstract and theological learning was, however, largely the outcome of her repressed and unhappy life. On her second widowhood, in 1650, she forsook learning and gave free reign to her "master-passion for bricks and mortar." But most of this energetic work, during which she rebuilt or restored her six castles and several churches, belongs after the Restoration. As a woman of affairs Lady Pembroke made a remarkable impression on her age. Bishop Rainbow, who says she had "a clear soul shining through a vivid body," emphasizes also "her great understanding and judgment." Pennant, in his *Tour*, said that she was regarded as "the most eminent character of her times, for intellectual accomplishments, for spirit, magnificence, and benevolence."

Another lady who carried over into this period the liberal training of Tudor days was Elizabeth Tanfield (1585–1639), who, at the age of fifteen, married Henry Carey, later Viscount Falkland. Our knowledge of her very interesting life and character is derived mainly from a *Life* written by one of her daughters. She was a lover of books from her childhood and learned languages — French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Transylvanian — practically without a teacher. Her daughter said of her:

> When she was but four or five years old they put her to learn French, which she did about five weeks, and not profiting at all gave it over; after, of herself, without a teacher, whilst she was a child she learned French, Spanish and Italian; . . . she learned Latin in the same manner. . . . Hebrew she likewise, about the same time, learned with very little teaching. . . . She then learned also of a Transylvanian his language, but never finding any use of it forgot it entirely. She read so incessantly at night that her mother forbade the servants to give her candles. But she bought candles at half a crown apiece of the servants and at twelve was £100 in their debt, a debt which she paid on her wedding day.

Her work as an author began early, for her first play was written about the time of her marriage. It was dedicated to her husband. A second play, *The Tragedy of Mariam the Faire*

Queene of Jewry, was written when she was eighteen or nineteen, though not printed till 1613.[1] She was early recognized as one of the most intellectual women of her time. In 1612 she was one of the three "Glories of Women" to whom John Davies dedicated his *Muses Sacrifice*. Later, in 1633, the publisher of Marston's Works dedicated them "To the Right Honourable the Lady Elizabeth Carey, Viscountess Falkland," because she was so "well acquainted with the Muses." That Lady Falkland's appetite for learning never abated is apparent from her daughter's testimony:

> She had read very exceedingly much: poetry of all kinds ancient and modern in several languages, all that ever she could meet; history very universally, especially all ancient Greek and Roman histories; all chronicles whatsoever of her own country, and the French histories very thoroughly: of most other countries something, though not so universally, of the ecclesiastical very much, most especially concerning its chief pastors. Of books treating of moral virtue or wisdom (such as Seneca, Plutarch's *Morals*, and natural knowledge, as Pliny, and of late ones, such as French, Mountaine, and English, Bacon) she had read very many when she was young. Of the fathers and controversial writers on both sides a great deal even of Luther and Calvin.[2]

Lady Falkland was converted to Catholicism in 1605 and she devoted all her learning to the service of the Church. She translated Cardinal Perron's *Works* and wrote lives of the saints in verse.

Lady Falkland's son Lucius married Letice Morrison, another "undue lover of books," who abridged herself of sleep that the hours of reading might be prolonged. This daughter-in-law of Lady Falkland was not only eager for learning, but she had independent views along social lines. One of her schemes was the foundation of houses "for the education of young gentlewomen and the retirement of widows with the belief that through such houses learning and religion might flourish more than heretofore in her own sex." Her early death in the time of the Civil War frustrated her plans, but they have an especial

[1] *The Tragedy of Mariam*, Malone Society Reprint, "Introduction."
[2] Godfrey, Elizabeth: *Home Life among the Stuarts*, p. 103.

interest as forecasting the ideas set forth by Mary Astell later in the century.[1]

Anna Hume, the daughter of David Hume, was carefully educated by her father at Godscroft, a property to which he retired that he might be unmolested in his devotion to literature. Anna joined in his pursuits with eagerness and intelligence, and after his death she did much to complete his work. In 1644 she superintended the publication of his *History of the House and Race of Douglas and Angus*. She translated Latin poems, and in 1644 she also published *The Triumph of Love, Chastity and Death*, translated from Petrarch. Drummond of Hawthornden speaks highly of her learning and of her "rare and pregnant wit."

Esther Kello (1571–1624) is often spoken of as one of the notable women of the Stuart period. Her works were counted worthy gifts for kings, and are preserved in royal libraries. Calligraphy was one of the fine arts in the seventeenth century. To write many different hands, to make flourishes, to decorate margins, to illuminate titles and capital letters, to make elaborate head or tail pieces to chapters, and to write the alphabets of many languages, were the elements of this art. No other accomplishment was so often advertised.[2] It was in this art that Esther Kello excelled. *Les Proverbes de Salomon* (1599), written in forty hands, and with all possible ornamental detail, was one of her most famous books. It was preserved in "Bodley's Library." In exactness, fineness, and beauty her books are said to rival the old illuminated manuscripts.[3]

There was published in 1630 a twelve-page tract entitled *A Chain of Pearl, or a Memorial of the Peerless Graces and*

[1] Carter, Thomas T.: *The Life of Nicholas Ferrar*, p. 102.

[2] The *Term Catalogues* illustrate the permanence of this interest. Edward Cocker was one of the best-known calligraphers in the second half of the seventeenth century. One of his works is *England's Penman, or Cocker's new Copy-Book, containing all the curious Hands practised in England and our neighboring Nations with admirable directions peculiar to each Hand. So also the Breaks of Secretary, Roman, and Italian Letters; with the exemplifying Court-hand, and an exact copy of the Greek alphabet.* (1679.)

[3] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 188.

heroic Virtues of Queen Elizabeth, of glorious memory, composed by the noble lady, Diana Primrose. The Pearls of the Chain are Religion, Chastity, Prudence, Temperance, Clemency, Justice, Fortitude, Science, Patience, and Bounty. A preliminary address to the author by one Dorothy Berry greets Diana as "the *Prime-rose* of the Muses nine." The Pearls are in the style of exaggerated compliment always associated with the name of Queen Elizabeth, but they could not have been inspired by any interested motives, for Elizabeth had been dead nearly a generation when they came from the press. Save the date of publication I have no facts about either Diana Primrose or Dorothy Berry. Perhaps their youth was spent during the "blest and happy years" when the Heroine they praised was on the throne.

> She, she it was that gave us golden days,
> And did the English name to heaven raise.

If so, and if they wrote when trouble was brewing between the King and the people, we can well understand the ardor of Diana Primrose's eulogy of the days when the Prince and People agreed "in sacred concord and sweet sympathy."

A very curious book is by Mary Fage. It is entitled *Fame's Roule* and appeared in 1637.[1] It is a collection of the most ingenious anagrams and acrostics on the names of four hundred and twenty persons of the "hopeful posterity" of Charles I. John Weymes, for instance, is anagrammed into "Show men joy" and John Hollis into "Oh! on my hills." The amplification of the anagram is mainly compliment with now and then a trace of exhortation. This was an age when playing with words gave undoubted pleasure, but four hundred and twenty anagrams on royal names would seem an undue tax on even the most agile manipulator of the alphabet.

Katherine Chidley wrote and spoke on questions of Church and State. In 1641 she published a quarto volume entitled *The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ*, in

[1] Dyce: *Specimens*, p. 510.

which she maintained that the congregations of the Saints should receive "no direction in worship from any other than Christ their head and lawgiver." She is described as "a most violent independent who talked with so much bitterness and with so clamorous a tongue as to vanquish opposing divines, and who wrote as furiously in behalf of her cause as if she were the Amazonian Queen in defence of the Trojans."

A literary oddity of the Cromwell period, a fertile writer whose half-mad and often unintelligible prophetic writings yet came true often enough to secure her a troublesome reputation as a "Cunning Woman," was Lady Eleanor Davies, the wife of Sir John Davies of Hereford. She was twice married and both husbands had burned her manuscripts, but finally, in 1651, there was printed a pamphlet, *The Restitution of Prophecy; that Buried Talent to be revived. By the Lady Eleanor.*[1] The Lady Eleanor was as devoted to anagrams as was Mary Fage. The change of Eleanor Davies into "Reveal O Daniel" was her mystic authorization as a prophet, until some wit shattered her anagram by producing "Never so mad a lady."

4. Schools for Girls before 1660

Of schools for girls during the period before 1660 we get but vague hints. John Whitgift, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1583, protested against having schools for "maiden children" within the precincts of the church. And he added in a note, "Especially seeing they may have instruction by women in the town." [2] In the statutes of Harrow School, made in 1590, there is a statement to the effect that "no girls shall be received or taught," hence the subject had at least been under discussion.[3] *Love's Labour 's Lost* seems to indicate that Holofernes taught girls as well as boys,[4] and Helena comments

[1] Dyce: *Specimens*, pp. 271–80.

[2] Strype, John: *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift*, vol. III, p. 383.

[3] Monroe, Paul: *Cyclopædia of Education*, under "Women, Higher Education of."

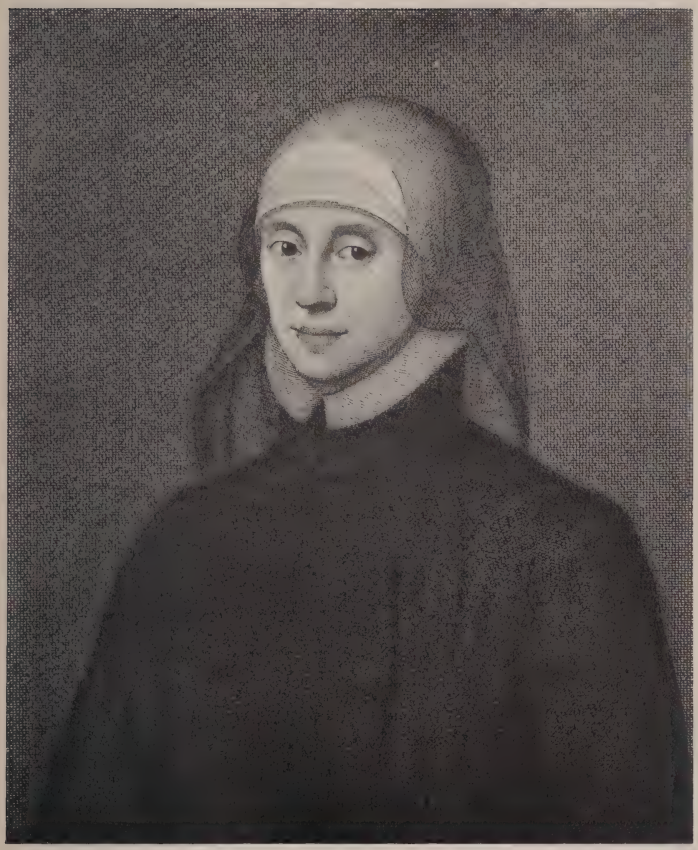
[4] *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV, Sc. 2. (1591.)

on the "school-days' friendship" between her and Hermia.[1] But these references belong to late Elizabethan times and are too indefinite to serve as evidence.

The best-known schools for girls in the first half of the seventeenth century were apparently religious in origin. One of these is the "Institute" founded by Mary Ward (1585–1645).[2] She was a brilliant and beautiful young Catholic who made it the aim of her life to influence young women to an acceptance of the Catholic faith. This she endeavored to accomplish through educational agencies. It was her plan to have an organization of uncloistered nuns who should not wear habits, who should be free to come and go, and who should adapt themselves in manner and dress to their surroundings in such ways as might be most advisable in the pursuance of their spiritual aims. Conditions in England made it useless to attempt such a school or community there. So the first establishment of the Institute was at St. Omer. This was in 1609. Five gentlewomen crossed the sea at that time with Mary Ward. The one she loved and trusted most was Winifred Wigmore, a descendant of the Throgmortons of Warwickshire, and so well educated that she spoke five languages fluently. She had a keen intellect, was wise, sympathetic, courageous, and very devout. Mary Poyntz, "gifted with all that can be most highly esteemed in person, birth or fortune," the youngest of the group, was scarcely sixteen when she cast her lot in permanently with Mary Ward. Of Jane Browne, Catharine Smith, and Susanna Rookwood fewer details are given. Later on Miss Ward was joined by Barbara Babthorpe, "highly educated and very well read . . . with a striking gift of eloquence," and by her own sister Barbara Ward. Each of these ladies had a companion, so it was quite a household that assembled at St. Omer, and they entered at once upon the life

[1] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act III, Sc. 2. (1594–95.)

[2] See Chambers, Mary C. E.: *The Life of Mary Ward*, ed. by Henry James Coleridge; Mary Salome (Mother): *Mary Ward, a Foundress of the Seventeenth Century*.



MARY WARD

From an engraving in *The Life of Mary Ward*, by Mary Elizabeth Chambers
of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin

they had planned. They practiced rigid self-denial, living on one meal a day and sleeping on straw beds, and submitting themselves to other austerities. Their time was given over to good works, especially to education. They established a school for French and English girls, receiving the English girls as boarders. In 1612 Miss Ward said that they had already received two nieces of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and another young lady from the family of the Earl of Southampton, and that many Catholic nobles were planning to send their daughters to be brought up in the Faith and good manners, by the ladies of St. Omer.

The Institute finally received the sanction of the pope and was successful in various countries. But Miss Ward's efforts to establish it in England in 1638 met with so much hostility that she was obliged to carry on her work secretly and by subterfuge, changing the location of her little band of followers from time to time as suspicion centered upon them. The Institute was finally broken up by the Puritans in 1642. Little is known of the actual work of the school. The members of the Institute were always so anxious and harried that there could have been no really systematic instruction except in the articles of faith. There are in the Convent of the Institute at Augsburg fifty large oil paintings dating from the seventeenth century, and representing events in its history. In these pictures Mary Ward's life is seen to be one of dramatic interest from her childhood to her death. And her personality is one of compelling charm. She was a heroine and a pioneer, an executive of first-rate ability, an extremely acute woman of business, and yet without loss of the graces and amenities of human intercourse. The St. Omer school shows genius. Within the limits of her church she was promulgating ideas the full fruition of which would not come for many years. She believed that sound mental training would establish women in their faith, and that women, if given opportunity and education, would prove to have powers not generally ascribed to them. To establish a school on this basis was an enterprise bolder, more original,

and more hazardous than was the opening of the first colleges for women in America.

Another religious school was that known as Little Gidding,[1] founded by Nicholas Ferrar (1592–1637). The life of Ferrar is one of great interest. He was a man of wide experience. He had known academic life at Cambridge, he had traveled in Holland, Germany, Italy, and Spain, he had conducted extensive business enterprises in connection with the Virginia Company, and had taken an important place in political life as a member of Parliament. But while still under forty he turned definitely to a life of religious sequestration. He and his mother bought the Manor of Little Gidding in Huntingdonshire in 1624 and there they set up the new establishment. He was joined by his brother John with his wife and three children, and by Mrs. Collet, his favorite sister, with her husband and sixteen children. To the children of these two families were added such children of the neighboring gentry as cared to come. In this household the girls were carefully educated. They had one master in Music, one in Arithmetic and Writing, one in English and Latin. They formed themselves into a little society called "The Academy" which had regular meetings for discussion of topics set for them. They took fanciful names,

[1] Much has been written concerning the life of Little Gidding. In 1790 Mr. G. P. Peckard, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and the husband of a descendant of the Ferrar family, published *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Nicholas Ferrar* (reprinted in Wordsworth's *Ecclesiastical Biography*, vol. IV). In 1828 and again in 1837 appeared *Brief Memoirs of Nicholas Ferrar*, by the Reverend T. M. Macdonogh (based on an unpublished *Life* by Bishop Turner, extracts from which had been published in *The Christian Magazine* in 1761). An abridgment of Peckard's *Memoirs* appeared in 1852. In 1855 came the most important of the works on Ferrar. It was *Nicholas Ferrar, Two Lives*, by J. E. B. Mayor, Cambridge. The Reverend Thomas Carter's *Nicholas Ferrar, his Household and Friends*, came out in 1892. In 1880 Mr. J. Henry Shorthouse described Little Gidding in chapter IV of *John Inglesant*. In 1896 Emma Marshall, in *A Haunt of Ancient Peace*, also introduced the life of Little Gidding into a fictitious narrative. In 1899 the *Story Books* of Little Gidding were edited by E. C. Shorland. In *Archæologia* for 1888 is Captain J. E. Ackland's "Catalogue of the Gidding Concordances." In Thomas Hearne's *Caii Vindiciæ*, vol. II, pp. 713–94, is "Remains of the Maiden-Sisters' Exercises at Little Gidding." In *Bibliographica* is an account of the Bindings. See also Godfrey's *Social Life under the Stuarts*, pp. 209–15.

and had many quaint and elaborate little formalities. The topics discussed by "Patient" and "Cheerful" and "Moderator" and "Visitor," and even by little four-year-old "Humble," were nearly always religious or ethical, and the purpose of the discussions was always moral improvement. So strong was the religious element, so rigid were the forms of fasting, feasting, and worshiping, that the school came under suspicion as a Protestant nunnery. In 1641 it was attacked in a pamphlet entitled *The Armenian Nunnery, or a Brief Description and Relation of the newly erected Monasticall Place called the Armenian Nunnery at Little Gidding.*

The school at Little Gidding has had its fame as a religious organization perpetuated in Mr. Shorthouse's *John Inglesant*, but it is even more famous in the annals of fine book-binding. It was the belief of Nicholas Ferrar that every one should be taught some hand-work, and he determined upon book-binding as a part of the regular school work at Little Gidding. Dr. Jebb says that "a Cambridge book-binder's daughter that bound rarely" was procured as an instructor. She came, he says, either from the University printers themselves or from some Cambridge bindery which they patronized where she herself had been trained. She brought some of her own stamps with her, and some of her own ideas as to how they should be arranged.

Even this activity was the handmaid of religion, and was, indeed, probably undertaken primarily in order to preserve the concordances of the four gospels so carefully worked out by Nicholas Ferrar. The girls learned to do all the mechanical parts with extreme nicety, joining the many tiny slips and putting in the illustrative engravings with great deftness. The name of the binder is not usually given in the book, but there is one exception. A book bound by the youngest of the workers bears the inscription:

Thanks be to God.

Done at Little Gidding. Anno Domino 1640

by Virginia Ferrar, an. 12. [1]

[1] Carter, T. T.: *Life of Nicholas Ferrar*, p. 127.

The curious little "histories" composed by "The Academy" were written out in three manuscript volumes and bound. They have been lately acquired by the British Museum. "The volumes measure $13\frac{1}{2}$x9 inches and are bound in black morocco, with a small double gold line running along the edge, finished with a little ornamental spray at each corner." The Concordances were more sumptuous. The *Bibliographica* gives full-page colored illustrations of these fine bindings and says of them:

> The beautiful effect which Mary Collet, who seems to have done much of the binding herself, was able to produce by different arrangements of the stamps I have described shows that she was undoubtedly a lady of much taste and originality . . . and it may fairly be considered that the velvet-bound volumes, of great size, gorgeous in color and rich in decoration, which were eventually produced under her supervision, must take the highest rank among amateur decorative book-bindings.
>
> Unequalled in size, original in design, and rich in execution, these volumes must be seen to be appreciated; then indeed the expressions which Charles I used concerning them, which sound extravagant, can be well understood. Although much faded, and sometimes re-backed and the sides relaid, with the silken ties all gone, enough of their old magnificence still remains to make us feel that we should indeed be proud that English binders could have produced such works.[1]

Aside from these religious schools, which were very small, there were undoubtedly some fashionable boarding-schools, such as Mrs. Salmon's school in Hackney where Katherine Fowler went.[2] Another fully organized private school at Hackney was that kept by Mrs. Perwick in 1643, where as many as eight hundred girls had been educated.[3] The existence of a school for girls in Richmond is shown by a curious document found among a large number of miscellaneous papers in Warwickshire. It is entitled "Account for Peggy's Disbursements since her going to schoole at Richmond, being in Sept. 1646":

[1] *Bibliographica*, vol. II, pp. 129–49. Article by Cyril Davenport.
[2] See p. 54.
[3] Monroe: *Cyclopædia of Education*, under "Private Schools."

	s.	d.
Payd for a louehood	2.	6
For carriing the truncke to Queenhive	0.	8
For carriing it to Hammersmith	1.	0
Payd for two pair of shoes	4.	0
Payd for a singing booke	1.	0
Given to M^{rsis} Jervoises mayd	1.	0
Payed for a hairlace and a pair of showstrings	1.	0
For an inckhorne	0.	4
For faggots. 2*s*.8*d*.; and cleaving of wood, 12*d*.	3.	8
For 9^{li} of soape 2*s*. 4*d*.; and starch 4*d*.	2.	8
For hooks and a bolte for the doore	0.	9
For sugar and licorich	1.	4
For silke and thread	0.	6
For 3^{li} of soape, 11*d*.; and starch 4*d*.; and carrying letters 6*d*.	1.	9
For 3^{li} of soape, 12*d*.; and starch 4*d*.	1.	4
For sugar, licorich and coultsfoot	1.	6
For a necklace, 12*d*.; for a m. of pins, 12*d*	2.	0
For a pair of cands (candles?) 6*d*.; for muckadine 4*d*.; for wormsend (worsted), 2*d*	1.	0
For shostrings, 6*d*.; for going on errands, 6*d*.	1.	0
For 3^{li} of soape, 12*d*.; for starch 4*d*.; thread and silk 4*d*.	1.	8
For a bason, 4*d*.; for carrying letters, 6*d*.; for tape 4*d*.	1.	2
For soape, 12*d*.; for starch, 4*d*.; for going on errands, 6*d*	1.	10
For a pair of pattins, 16*d*.; for three pair of shoes, 6*s*.	7.	4
For callico to line her stockins, 2*d*.; for showstrings 4*d*.	0.	6
For 3^{li} of soape, 12*d*.; for a pint of white wine 4*d*.	1.	4
For ale, 3*d*.; for $\frac{1}{2}^{li}$ of sugar, 8*d*	0.	11
For a m. of pins, 12*d*.; for a corle and one pair of half-handed gloves, 8*d*.	1.	8
Given to the writing mr	2.	6
For silke, 12*d*.; for silver for the tooth-pick case, 4*d*.	1.	4
For a sampler, 12*d*. for thread, needles, paper, pins, and parchment, 30*d*.	3.	6
For a pair of shoes, 2*s*. 2*d*.; for ribbon, 3*d*.	2.	5
For soape, 12*d*.; for starch, 4*d*. for carriing a letter, 4*d*.	1.	8
To the waterman bringing the (box?) to Richmond	1.	0
For shoestrings, 6*d*. for purge, 18*d*	2.	0
For bringing the box from Richmond	1.	0
For a coach from Fleetestreete	1.	0
For wood to this time	15.	10
Totall of disbursements to this 15th day of Aprill, 1647 is	£3.	18. 5[1]

Peggy's clothing and her board and tuition must have been paid for by her father. The accurate little list represents only her personal and incidental expenses. The writing-master's fee, the purchase of an inkhorn, a singing-book, and materials

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vol. xi, p. 279.

for a sampler are the only suggestions that Peggy was being educated. But several of the items are indicative of general school conditions. For instance, if a girl had a fire she evidently had to pay extra for it, Peggy's largest single item being for wood, "cleaving of wood," and "faggotts." The next largest sum goes for "soape" and starch. Peggy apparently did her own laundry, or at least bought the materials used; and she bought them in amounts suggestive of disproportionate emphasis on clean linen. In clothing the most surprising purchase is of six pairs of shoes and one pair of "pattins" in six months. It is a pity we have not the letters for the carrying of which Peggy paid ten pence. They might serve to throw light on her expense account.

In May, 1649, Evelyn records in his *Diary*, "Went to Putney by water, in the barge with divers ladies, to see the schools, or Colleges, of the young gentlewomen." These Putney schools may have been under the charge of Mrs. Makin. In that case they were the forerunners of the more advanced school she established at Tottenham High Cross in 1673.

One interesting point occurs in the foundation of a school for boys by Balthasar Gerbier in 1648. This school was an academy wherein the sons of noble families could be taught classics, mathematics, drawing, painting, carving, music, behavior, etc. The novel element in the school is Gerbier's advertisement December 21, 1649, in which he says that ladies are to be admitted to his lectures.[1]

If girls were educated at all during the period from 1603 to 1660 it must have been, in the main, at home under parents and tutors. But even of such education the records are meager. Little Gidding was practically a home school, but it stands as an isolated attempt. The few little pictures of more secular home education that have been by chance preserved to us indicate no very valuable training. Mrs. Alice Thornton (1626–1707), Lady Anne, daughter of the Earl of Strafford, and Lady

[1] Monroe, Paul: *Cyclopædia of Education*, under "Gerbier"; *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vol. III, p. 317.

Arabella Wentworth, were brought up in Ireland and were given "the best education that Kingdome could afford." They were taught to write and speak French; singing, dancing, playing on the lute and theorboe, and such other accomplishments as "working silkes, gummework, sweetmeats, and other sutable huswifery" such as was necessary for girls of their social position.[1]

We get some further light from autobiographical sketches by the Duchess of Newcastle,[2] Lady Fanshawe,[3] and Mrs. Hutchinson,[4] women whose mature work belongs in the Restoration period or not many years before it, but whose childhood and early youth belong in the period under consideration, and serve in a measure to illustrate its methods. The educational advantages afforded these young daughters of the best families were like those of an eighteenth-century finishing-school, and were far removed from the stern mental discipline in the school of Sir Thomas More.

[1] Hill, Georgiana: *Women in English Life*, vol. I, p. 150.
[2] See p. 46. [3] See p. 74. [4] See p. 69.

CHAPTER II

LEARNED LADIES IN ENGLAND FROM 1650 TO 1760

1. An Introductory Group in the Years 1650–1675

The brief running summaries in the preceding chapter have perhaps served to bring into prominence two sharply contrasted periods. The first half of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth seem even more than a hundred years apart in tone and temper. We turn from the eager intellectual life of many women in the Tudor period, from their full and rich opportunities, and we find that in the time of the earlier Stuarts there were very few women who took any pride in learning, that there was little or no provision at home or in schools for any but the most desultory sort of education for girls, and that there were practically no formulated ideals or theories of intellectual advancement for women. But at the close of this barren half-century we come upon what may be considered the real beginnings of the modern work of women. This era of development may be appropriately introduced by the presentation of several women who, while in no sense cohering into a group, are yet alike in that their home education belongs in the reign of Charles I, that later they had the stern training incident on Civil War conditions, and that their published work belongs before 1675.

Margaret Lucas, the Duchess of Newcastle (1624-1674)

The most talked-of learned lady of the Restoration period was the Duchess of Newcastle.[1] She was brought up by her mother, who was left a widow with a great fortune and a family of eight children when Margaret was an infant. The Duchess in her *Autobiography* describes a family life conducted

[1] See *The Philosophical and Physical Opinions, Written by her Excellency, the Lady Marchionesse of Newcastle*, London, 1655 (containing Lord New-

MARGARET CAVENDISH, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE.

From an engraving in Horace Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, London, 1806

with splendor and luxury. She comments on the elaborate attendance, the rich and costly garments, the many pleasures, secured for the children by the industrious care and tender love of their mother. It was a bright, gay, free, affectionate home life. But we get only slight indications of any educational advantages. "As for tutors, although we had for all sorts of vertues, as singing, dancing, playing on musick, reading, writing, working, and the like, yet we were not kept strictly thereto, they were rather for formality than benefit, for my Mother cared not so much for our dancing and fidling, singing and prating of severall languages, as that we should be bred virtuously, modestly, civilly, honourably and on honest principles." None of these opportunities met Margaret's needs. She says she had a natural stupidity in learning foreign tongues, cared little for music, disliked needlework, found cards and games tiresome, and dancing frivolous. Apparently the freedom of the family life left her at liberty to follow her real interests which were in the main intellectual. Here she had the sympathetic aid of her

castle's "Epistle to justifie the Lady Newcastle, and Truth against falsehood, laying those false and malicious aspersions of her, that she was not Author of her Books." Also "To the Reader," "To the Two Universities," "An Epilogue" and several brief introductory epistles); *Philosophical Letters: or, Modest Reflections Upon some Opinions in Natural Philosophy, Maintained by several Famous and Learned Authors of this Age, Expressed by way of Letters: By the Thrice Noble, Illustrious, and Excellent Princess, the Lady Marchioness of Newcastle,* London, 1664 (containing "To His Excellency the Lord Marquis of Newcastle," "To the most Famous University of Cambridge" and "To the Reader"); *A True Relation of the Birth, Breeding, and Life of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, Written by Herself. With a Critical Preface, etc., by Sir Egerton Brydges, M.P. Printed at the private Press of Lee Priory,* 1814 (taken from *Nature's Pictures drawn by Fancy's Pencil*); *The Lives of William Cavendish Duke of Newcastle, and of his wife Margaret Duchess of Newcastle. Written by the thrice noble and illustrious Princess, Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle,* ed. by Mark Antony Lower, M.A., London, 1872 (a reprint of the first edition of 1667); *The Life of William Cavendish Duke of Newcastle to which is added, The True Relation of My Birth, Breeding, and Life by Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle,* ed. by C. H. Firth, M.A., Scribner, 1886; *Letters and Poems in Honour of the Incomparable Princess, Margaret, Dutchess of Newcastle, Written by Several Persons of Honour and Learning. In the Savoy,* 1676; Ballard: *Memoirs,* pp. 299–306; Walpole, Horace: *Royal and Noble Authors.*

brother, Lord Lucas. The precocious development of her mind is shown by the fact that at twelve she had written a book on a philosophical subject.

At eighteen she was appointed maid of honor to Queen Henrietta Maria and accompanied her to France. There, at twenty, she became the second wife of the Duke of Newcastle, a nobleman thirty-two years older than herself, but who was, she says, "the onely Person I ever was in love with." She was with him during the trying years of his absence from England and it was during this difficult and tedious period that literature became her resource. Her publications began with *Philosophical Fancies* in 1653 and closed with *Grounds of Natural Philosophy* in 1668, during which period she wrote nearly twelve folio volumes. The portions of her work concerning which she felt the greatest measure of self-congratulation were her studies in natural philosophy. Her *Philosophical Fancies* of 1653 was expanded in 1655, and in 1663 received its final form as *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*. Of all her books this was "her best beloved and favourite." But the quality on which she chiefly prides herself is the very one that nullifies her work. Originality is her great boast, an originality so pronounced as to refuse to base its deductions on the writings of previous thinkers. Her husband substantiates her claim. He says that all her philosophical fancies are spun out of her own brain, and that, if she does not use the technical terms of philosophers, it is because her language is her own too. She has scorned to talk with any "profest scholar" to learn his phraseology. "She did never impe her high-flying Phancies, with any old broken Fethers out of any university." [1] She says herself that she could never "afford board-room to other people's ideas lest the legitimate offspring of her own brain should be crowded out." [2] In Part IV, "On the Motion of the Bodie," we find that the Duchess has never studied anatomy, but this apparent disqualification does not prove inhibitory. In *An Epistle to the Reader* she explains the situation:

[1] *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, Duke of Newcastle's "Epistle."
[2] *Ibid.*, "To the Reader."

I am to be pardoned, if I have not the names and tearms that the Anatomists have or use; or if I have mistaken some parts in the body, or misplaced any: for truly I never read of Anatomie, nor never saw any man opened, much less dissected, which for my better understanding I would have done; but I found that neither the caurage of nature, nor the modesty of my sex would permit me. Werefore it would be a great chance, even to a wonder I should not erre in some; but I have seen the intrals of beasts, but never as they are placed in their bodies, but as they are cut out to be drest . . . which intrals I have heard are much like mans, especially a hogs, so that I know man hath a brain, a heart, a stomach, liver, lights, spleen, and the like; yet these I never viewed with a curious and searching eye, but as they have laien in some vessels; and as for bones, nerves, muscels, veines and the like, I know not how they are placed in the body, but as I have gathered several times from several relations, or discourses: here a bit and there a crum of knowledge, which my natural reason hath put together.[1]

From any modern standpoint of scientific excellence the inaccuracy and amazing self-confidence of these studies render them worse than futile. But it was not ignorance that was charged against the Duchess by her critics. The experimental method was having its triumphs, but doubtless a good deal of the scientific writing of the first half of the century was marked by a dogmatic tone and an uncertainty as to facts, so the Duchess was not attacked on that score. The common report that irritated the Duke of Newcastle to a spirited defense of his wife was that she could not have written these books, for "no lady could understand so many hard words." The Duke takes up various kinds of hard words such as terms of divinity, philosophy, astronomy, and geometry, and shows that natural wit, common sense, and some observation could compass most of them. He gives the following account of the way he and the Duchess acquired a medical vocabulary: "But would you know the great Mystery of these Physical terms, I am almost ashamed to tell you; not that we have been ever sickly, but by melancholy often supposed ourselves to have such diseases as we had not, and learned Physitians were too wise to put us

[1] *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, "To the Reader," pp. 100–101.

out of that humour, and so these terms cost us much more than they are worth, and I hope there is nobody so malicious as to envie us our bargain." [1] At the end of his Preface the Duke comes to what he considers the real cause of the aspersions on his Lady's books: "But here's the crime, a Lady writes them, and to intrench so much on the male prerogative, is not to be forgiven." The Duchess, in her *Address to the Two Universities*, recurs to this idea. She hopes her book may be received

> for the good incouragement of our sex, lest in time we should grow irrational as idiots, by the dejectednesse of our spirits, through the carelesse neglects, and despisements of the masculine sex to the effeminate, thinking it impossible we should have either learning or understanding, wit or judgement, as if we had not rational souls as well as men, and we out of a custom of dejectedness think so too, which makes us quit all industry towards profitable knowledge . . . so as we are become like worms that only live in the dull earth of ignorance, winding ourselves sometimes out, by the help of some refreshing rain of good educations which seldom is given us; for we are kept like birds in cages to hop up and down in our houses . . . we are shut out of all power, and Authority by reason we are never imployed either in civil nor marshall affaires, our counsels are despised, and laught at, the best of our actions are troden down with scorn, by the over-weaning conceit men have of themselves and through a despisement of us.[2]

But she presents her book with some confidence to the universities as places where are to be found right judgment and respectful civility. And at any rate she would rather "lie intombed under the dust of an University" than be "worshipped by the Vulgar as a Deity."

One of the Duchess's most curious books is *Orations of Divers Sorts accommodated to Divers Places*. Among the "orations" is a "collection of speeches for a convivial meeting of country gentlemen in a market town, ending with 'a speech of a quarter-drunk gentleman,' and 'a speech of a half-drunk gentleman.' Another little collection headed 'Female Orations' reports the speeches delivered at a meeting of women on

[1] *Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, Duke of Newcastle's "Epistle."
[2] *Ibid.*, "Address to the Two Universities."

the great question of combining together to make themselves 'as free, happy, and famous as men.'" [1]

When the Duke and Duchess returned to England after the Restoration they lived for the most part at one of their country estates, but they made occasional visits to London. It was then that the Duchess's beauty, wealth, eccentric dress and manners, and literary and scientific pretensions made her a conspicuous and, to some, a ridiculous figure. Sir Walter Scott, in *Peveril of the Peak*,[2] makes Charles II say of the Duchess, "Her Grace is an entire raree-show in her own person — a universal masquerade — indeed a sort of private Bedlam hospital"; and this sums up the attitude that found expression in the phrase, "Mad Madge of Newcastle." In 1653 Dorothy Osborne wrote to Sir William Temple: "Let me ask you if you have seen a book of poems newly come out, made by my Lady Newcastle? For God's sake if you meet with it send it to me; they say 't is ten times more extravagant than her dress. Sure, the poor woman is a little distracted, she could never be so ridiculous as to venture at writing books, and in verse too." A little later she wrote: "You need not send me Lady Newcastle's book at all, for I have seen it, and am satisfied that there are many soberer people in Bedlam." [3] Mrs. Evelyn called on the Duchess in 1667 and wrote to Mr. Bohun:

> I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls. Her habit particular, fantastical, not unbecoming a good shape, which truly she may boast of. Her face discovers the facility of her sex, in being yet persuaded it deserves the esteem years forbid, by the infinite care she takes to place her curls and patches. Her mein surpasses the imagination of poets, or the descriptions of a romance heroine's greatness: her gracious bows, seasonable nods, courteous stretching out of her hands, twinkling of her eyes, and various gestures of approbation, show what may be expected from her discourse, which is as airy, empty, whimsical and

[1] *Life of Duke and Duchess of Newcastle* (ed. Frith), p. xxxi.
[2] Scott, Sir Walter: *Peveril of the Peak*, chap. XLV.
[3] Osborne, Dorothy: *Letters* (ed. Parry), pp. 92, 111.

rambling as her books, aiming at science difficulties, high notions, terminating commonly in nonsense, oaths, and obscenity.[1]

On May 30, 1667, the Duchess made a formal visit to the Royal Society, and Pepys says she was all admiration at the fine experiments they showed her, but he did not hear her say anything that was worth hearing. There had been much objection to admitting her to the rooms of the Society, some of the members fearing that the town would be "full of ballads of it," but the visit seems to have passed off mildly and with the respectful observance to which she was accustomed.

In spite of the stream of private criticism already indicated, the almost unmixed adulation of which the Duchess was the subject is indicated by the *Letters and Poems, in Honour of the incomparable Princess Margaret, Dutchess of Newcastle*, published in 1676, two years after her death. In her lifetime, too, the praise was equally extravagant. Resounding Latin titles, such as *Illustrissima Heroina, Excellentissima Dux, Eminentissima Princeps*, came to her from high sources. The Rector Magnificus of the University of Leyden called her not only *Princeps fœminini sexus*, but *Princeps terrarum*. And the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge in a complimentary address said that the great women of old could not contend with her for the palm of learning, but rather would they, with bent knee, adore this *solam Margaretam Consumatissimam Principem*. Even so sane a man as Evelyn wrote her a most flattering letter when she sent him her works in 1674. Beginning with Zenobia

[1] On swearing note the following extract from a sixteenth-century writer: "There is no regyon nor countrie that doth use more swearynge than is used in Englande, for a chyld that scarse can speake, a boy, a gyrle, a wenche, now-a-days wyl swere as great othes as an old knave and an old drabbe. . . . As for swearers a man nede not to seke for thym, for in the Kynges courte and lordes courtes in cities, borowes and in townes, and in every house, in maner there is abbominable swerynge, and no man dothe go about to redresse it, but doth take swearyng as for no sinne, which is a damnable synne; and they the which doth use it, be possessed of the Devill, and no man can helpe them but God and the Kynge." (Hill, Georgiana: *Women in English Life*, vol. I, p. 116.)

See p. 317 for reprobation of "female swearers" in *The Ladies' Calling* (1671). Swift's *Polite Conversation* (1738) bears the same implication as to the manners of good society in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

MARGARET CAVENDISH, DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE

From an engraving in *The Lives of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, and of his wife Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle*, edited by Mark Antony Lower, London, 1872

he assembled the great women of ancient times, the learned ladies of more modern days in France, Spain, Italy, and Holland, and concluded with

Mary de Gournay, & the famous Anna M. Schurman: and of our owne country, Queene Elizabeth, Queene Jane, the Lady Weston, Mrs. Philips our late Orinda, the daughters of S^r^ Tho: More; the Queene Christina of Sweden, & Elizabeth, daughter of a queen also to whom the renowned Des Cartes dedicated his learned worke, & the profound researches of his extraordinary talent. But all these, I say, sum'd together, possesse but that divided, which yr Grace retaines in one; so as Lucretia Marinella, who writ a book (in 1601) *dell' Excellenzia della Donne, con difetti è mancamenti de gli huomini*, had no neede to have assembled so many instances and arguments to adorne the work, had she lived to be witnesse of Margarite, Dutchess of Newcastle, to have read her writings, & to have heard her discourse of the science she comprehended.[1]

Praise could hardly go further.

The best modern judgment discards the encomiums, but yet gives the Duchess a fairly high place. Sir Egerton Brydges, the editor of her *Autobiography*, says:

That the Duchess was deficient in a cultivated judgment; that her knowledge was more multifarious than exact; and that her powers of fancy and sentiment were more active than her powers of reasoning, I will admit; but that her productions, mingled as they are with great absurdities, are wanting either in talent or in virtue, or even genius, I cannot concede.[2]

The Duchess was buried in Westminster Abbey with this inscription on her monument:

Here lies the loyal Duke of Newcastle and his Duchess, his second wife, by whom he had no issue. Her name was Margaret Lucas, youngest sister to Lord Lucas of Colchester, a noble family, for all

[1] The "Matchless Orinda" gives us an inkling of the way some of this praise should be discounted. It seems that Waller was reported to have said that he would give all his own poems to have been the author of a poem written by the Duchess of Newcastle. On being taxed with insincerity he answered that he could "do no less in Gallantry than be willing to devote all his own Papers to save the Reputation of a Lady, and keep her from the Disgrace of having written anything so ill." (*Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus*, Letter XLII.)

[2] *Life of the Duchess of Newcastle* (ed. Brydges), "Critical Preface."

the brothers were valliant, and all the sisters virtuous. This Duchess was a wise, witty, and learned Lady, which her many books do well testify; She was a most virtuous, and loving, and careful wife, and was with her Lord all the time of his banishment and miseries; and when they came home never parted with him in his solitary retirements.

The two books by the Duchess that one would not willingly let die are her *Life* of her husband and her *Autobiography*. These are of permanent value as pictures of the life of a great, rich family like that of her girlhood home, and the straitened life in exile, with the later affluent and splendid life of a noble high in royal favor such as was the Duke of Newcastle. All the personal portions of both books are told with an air of genuineness, a naïveté, that make delightful reading. The Duchess summed up her life as that of a woman "honourably born, carefully bred, and nobly married to a wise man," and it was out of these happy domestic relations that her best work came.

Mrs. Katherine Philips (1631–1664)

Contemporary with the Duchess of Newcastle was Katherine Fowler, better known as Mrs. Katherine Philips, and better still as the "Matchless Orinda." She was the daughter of John Fowler, "an eminent merchant in Bucklersbury," and Katherine Oxenbridge. Aubrey gives a quaint account of her precocious childhood as it was described to him by "her cosen Blacket who lived with her from her swadling cloutes till eight, and taught her to read." Aubrey says: "When a child she was mighty apt to learn, and . . . she had read the Bible through before she was full four yeares old; she could have sayed I know not how many places of Scripture and Chapters. She was a frequent hearer of sermons; had an excellent memory and could have brought away a sermon in her memory." [1]

Her further education was carried on at Hackney at the school of "Mris Salmon, a famous schoolmistress, Presbyterian. . . . Loved poetrey at schoole, and made verses there.

[1] Aubrey: *Brief Lives*, vol. II, pp. 153–54.

She takes after her grandmother Oxenbridge . . . who was an acquaintance of Mr. Francis Quarles, being much inclined to poetrie herself." As a child Katherine evidently was as ardent a Presbyterian as her school-mistress and her Oxenbridge ancestors. "She was very religiously devoted when she was young; prayed by herself an hower together, and tooke sermons verbatim when she was but ten yeares old. . . . She was when a child much against the bishops, prayd to God to take them to him, but afterwards was reconciled to them. Prayed aloud, as the hypocritical fashion then was, and was overheared."

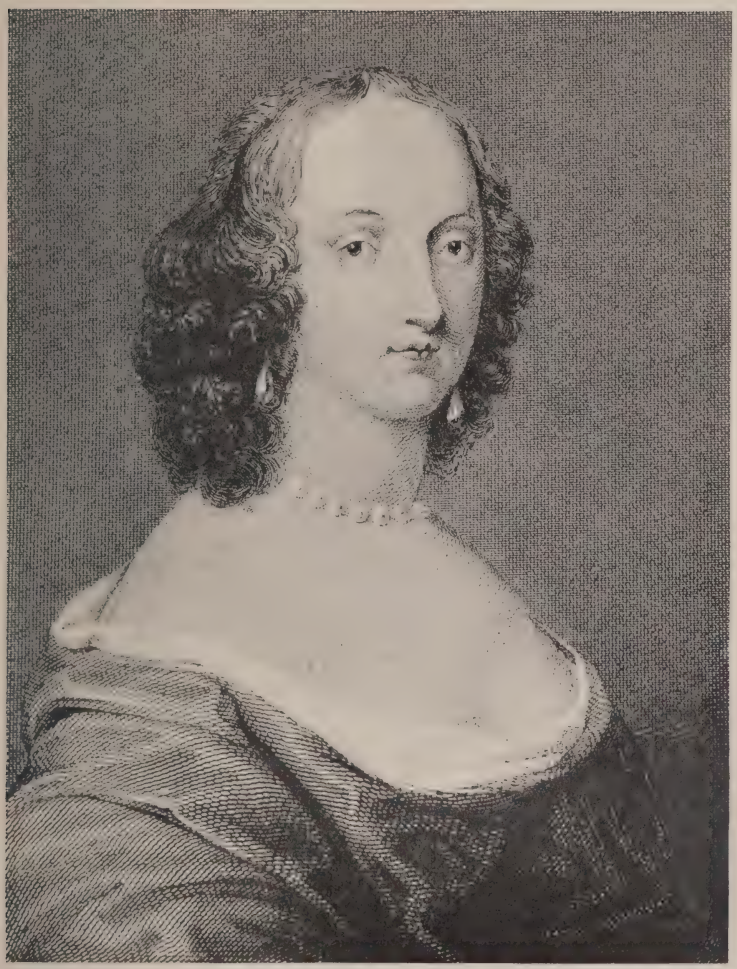
At sixteen she married Mr. James Philips, Esquire, of Cardigan Priory, Wales. Her published work includes numerous brief poems, most of them of a personal nature, two plays translated from the French, and several letters to Sir Charles Cotterell. This is rather scanty productivity to serve as a basis for the great vogue Mrs. Philips certainly had, nor to the modern reader does the quality of the work sufficiently account for the enthusiasm it excited. Yet we have abundant testimony that the last ten years of her life were made brilliant by praise from the most authoritative sources. Sir Charles Cotterell, her intimate friend and the editor of her *Works*, said of her: "We might well have call'd her the English Sappho, she of all the Poets of former Ages, being for her Verses and her Virtues both, the most highly valued; but she has call'd herself ORINDA, a name that deserves to be added to the Muses, and to live with honour as long as they. Were our language as generally known to the world, as the Greek and Latin were anciently, or as the French is now, her Verses could not be confined within the limits of our Islands, but would spread themselves as far as the Continent has Inhabitants, or as the Seas have any Shore." Something must be allowed here for the enthusiasm of a friend and an editor, but other estimates were almost as extreme. The Earl of Orrery had thought that the high praise of her poems at court must be exaggerated, but when he came to know her and her writings the court eulogies

were to him but "Imperfect Trophies," and he exclaimed, "If there be Helicon, in Wales it is." Henry Lawes and Dr. Coleman, the best composers of the day, set some of her poems to music. Cowley in two poems to her praised her for her spirit "so rich, so noble, and so high," her "inward Virtue," her "well-knit Sence," and for her poems in which were united all the excellences of both sexes. When her translation of *Pompey* appeared in the Smock-Alley Theater, Dublin, the Earl of Roscommon wrote the Prologue and Sir Edward Dering the Epilogue, and the success of the play was assured by the enthusiastic support of the aristocracy of Dublin. In 1659 Jeremy Taylor dedicated to her his *Discourse of the nature, offices and measures of friendship.* Though she does not exactly fulfill the prophecy of Mr. Thomas Rowe, that "Orinda should be an ever-glorious name to ages yet to come," yet her fame was by no means confined to her own brief day. We hear echoes of it far down in the eighteenth century. The highest praise that could be given to any woman poet was to bracket her with Orinda.

By the nineteenth century her vogue was almost extinct, but chance appreciation came from an unexpected quarter. Keats wrote to Reynolds in September, 1817: [1]

> The world, and especially our England, has, within the last thirty years, been vexed and teased by a set of Devils, whom I Detest so much that I almost hunger after an Acherontic promotion to a Torturer, purposely for their accomodation. These devils are a set of women, who having taken a snack or Luncheon of Literary scraps, set themselves up for towers of Babel in languages, Sapphos in Poetry, Euclids in Geometry, and everything in nothing. Among such the name of Montague has been preëminent. The thing has made a very uncomfortable impression on me. I had longed for some real feminine Modesty in these things, and was therefore gladdened in the extreme on opening the other day, one of Bailey's Books — a book of poetry written by one beautiful Mrs. Philips, a friend of Jeremy Taylor's and called "The Matchless Orinda" — you must have heard of her, and most likely read her Poetry — I wish you have not, that I may have the pleasure of treating you with a few stanzas.

[1] Keats, John: *Letters to his Family and Friends*, pp. 29–30.



MRS. KATHERINE PHILIPS

"From an original Picture in the Collection of her Grace the Dutchess of Dorset"
Drawn by J. Thurston. Engraved by W. Finden. From an engraving in
Effigies Poeticae, London, 1824

Whereupon he quotes the ten stanzas written by Orinda on parting with her friend "Rosania," a poem of genuine feeling and quaintly charming in expression. "In other of her poems," says Keats, "there is a most delicate fancy of the Fletcher kind — which we will con over together."

Thus the magic of Orinda's name reasserts itself, and she is again praised as a lady of "delicate fancy," "feminine modesty," and unmatched in friendship. A reintroduction to a general public was given by Mr. Gosse's delightful essay in *Seventeenth Century Studies* (1885). And in 1904 a selection from her poems was published with an acute "Appreciation."

In her own day Orinda was not only prized as a poet, but she was considered the highest example, the prophet and expounder, of true friendship. Much of her verse was called forth by her Society of Friendship. The chief members of this circle were "Antenor" (Mr. Philips), "Lucasia" (Miss Anne Owen), "Rosania" (Miss Mary Aubrey), "Regina" (Mrs. John Collier), "Palæmon" (Jeremy Taylor), "Silvander" (Sir Edward Dering), "Policrite" (Lady Margaret Cavendish), "Celimena" (Miss E. Boyl), "Cassandra" (Mrs. C. P., her dear sister), and "Critander" (Mr. J. B.). "Ardelia," "Phillis," and "Pastora" remain unidentified. There were doubtless others in the circle, but these we know because they all received poetical tributes from Orinda. There were over thirty-five private individuals intimately addressed in her poems.

It is undoubtedly the personal character of her poems that secured her so wide and favorable an audience while her writings were still in manuscript and known only as they passed from hand to hand. Each person addressed was the center of a new circle of readers. But the intimacy of the poems is one reason for the actual agony Orinda suffered when an unauthorized edition of her poems appeared in 1662. "Their Names expos'd in this Impression without their leave" was the burden of her grief. And she was likewise injured in her modesty. The publication seemed to put her in the position of a woman bold and masculine enough to send her writings into the world. A

thousand pounds, she says, would not have bought her consent. To Sir Charles Cotterell she wrote:

To me (Sir) who never writ any line in my life with any intention to have it printed. . . . This is a most cruel accident, and hath made so proportionate an impression upon me, that really it hath cost me a sharp fit of sickness since I heard it.

If the garbled version makes a true version a necessary reparation of the misfortune she will yield, "but with the same reluctancy as I would cut off a Limb to save my Life."

I am so far from expecting applause for anything I scribble, that I can hardly expect pardon; and sometimes I think that employment so far above my reach, and unfit for my Sex, that I am going to resolve against it for ever; and could I have recovered those fugitive Papers that have escaped my hands, I had long since made a sacrifice of them all. The truth is, I have an incorrigible inclination to that folly of riming, and intending the effects of that humour, only for my own amusement in a retir'd life; I did not so much resist it as a wiser woman would have done.[1]

She had been planning a visit to London, but she wrote in despair to Dorothy Osborne (then Mrs. Temple):

I must never show my face there or among any reasonable people again, for some dishonest person hath got some collection of my Poems as I heare, and hath deliver'd them to a Printer who I heare is just upon putting them out and this hath soe extreamly disturbed me, both to have my private folly so unhandsomely exposed and ye belief that I believe the most part of ye world are apt enough to believe yt I connived at this ugly accident that I have been on ye rack ever since I heard it, though I have written to Col. Jeffries who first sent me word of it to get ye Printer punished, the book called in, and me someway publicly vindicated yet I shall need all my friends to be my champions to ye criticall and mallicious that I am soe innocent of this pittiful design of a knave to get a groat that I never was more vexed at anything and yt I utterly disclaim whatever he hath so unhandsomely expos'd. I know you have goodness and generosity enough to doe me right in your company and to give me your opinion too how I may best get this impression supressed and myself vindi-

[1] Philips, Mrs. Katherine: *Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus*, Letter XLV. This letter also appeared in the Preface to her *Works* in 1768.

cated and therefore I will not beg your pardon for troubling you with this impertinent story.[1]

Her pride of authorship would, however, almost certainly have triumphed over her modesty if she could have lived to see the sumptuous volume with its bravery of eulogistic verse in which Sir Charles Cotterell enshrined her work. Her letters to him, under the title *Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus*, were published in 1705 and add distinctly to her fame.

On the whole, Orinda becomes a personage to us and an agreeable one. There is a note of sincerity through even her most unrestrained poems; the ardor of her affections is unmistakable; her loyalty to the King, to her friends, to her ideas, is genuine. She does not labor compliments. Her praise pours forth from the abundance of her feeling. Perhaps one reason for her ready popularity was that she aroused no antagonisms. Though a literary woman there was nothing about her that was masculine, strident, or assertive. Her outlook on life was gracious and tolerant. She loved simplicity and retirement and was never dazzled by wealth or titles.

At any rate, there is one interesting and significant fact about her and that is her success. It was a kind of success new in English literary history. A woman without any commanding advantages of birth or fortune, only moderately good-looking, without any compelling fascination, unstimulated by parental or tutorial ambitions, with but the scantiest schooling, married to an ordinary, rather dull man; a virtuous, sane, orderly, thrifty woman, excellent in business, housewifely, with no eccentricities, simply follows her feelings in friendship and the bent of her mind towards authorship, and attains in a few years a position notably high.

Two interesting young women who belong chronologically to this group are not exactly learned ladies, but they had intellectual piquancy and alertness. One of them, Mary North, was the eldest of the four-

Mary North (d. 1662)

[1] Giffard, Lady: *Her Life and Letters*, p. 41.

teen children of Dudley, the fourth Lord North. The mother of this large family was evidently a remarkable woman. Her son Roger says of her: "The Government of us was In generall severe, but tender; our mother maintained her authority, and yet condiscended to Entertain us. She was learned (for a lady) and Eloquent. Had much Knoledg of History and readyness of witt to express herself, in the part of Reproof, wherein she was fluent and pungent. . . . But without occasion given to the Contrary, she was debonair, familiar, and very liberall of hir discourse to entertain all." This combination of the pungent and the debonair made an effective family discipline, for it was said that there was not a son or daughter whose abilities were not of a very high order, and that the daughters were hardly less cultured than their brothers. And of this group Mary was, says Roger, "by far the most brilliant — a woman of real genius." A charming picture is given of the ladies of the North family, gathered together according to the custom of the time for endless tasks of tapestry and embroidery, listening entranced to Mary who recited romances for hours together, giving not only the story, but the conversations, the substance of letters, and the general reflections. She had "a superiour wit, a prodigious memory, and was most agreeable." "She instituted a sort of order of the wits of her time and acquaintance, whereof the symbol was a sun with a circle touching the rays, and upon that in blue ground were wrote αὐτάρκης in proper Greek characters, which her father suggested. Divers of these were made in silver and enamel, but in embroidery plenty, which were dispersed to those wittified ladies who were willing to come into their order; and for a while they were formally worn, until the foundress fell under the government of another, and then it was left off." [1] Mary North was married to Sir William Spring of Pakenham and died in 1662 in her twenty-fourth year. Her feminine "Order of Intellect," her quaint badge, "the symbol of a community of taste and interest in literature, science, and art," [2] offer an attractive and hope-

[1] *The Lives of the Norths*, vol. III, p. 289. [2] *Ibid.*, Editor's Preface.

ful prospect. It was an inconspicuous little organization, springing up gayly and spontaneously, and its scope of learning may not have gone beyond the French romances the gifted young leader knew by heart, but it was at any rate an association of young women with some pronounced literary aspirations and tastes, and as such it stands out alone, a charming picture set in the framework of the anxious years before the Restoration.

Dorothy Osborne, Lady Temple (1627-1694)

When Dorothy Osborne had been Lady Temple some years her husband wrote from London a "sweet scrip full of reproaches" at the businesslike tone and brevity of her letters. She answered with a touch of her old sauciness: "Pray what did you expect I should have writ, tell me that I may know how to please you next time. But now I remember me you would have such letters as I used to write before we were marryed, there are a great many such in your cabinet yt I can send you if you please, but none in my head I can assure you." [1]

The love letters thus preserved in Sir William Temple's cabinet have had a narrow escape from oblivion. They were found among the Temple papers when Mr. Courtenay was preparing his elaborate *Life of Sir William Temple*, and forty-two extracts from the letters were put by Mr. Courtenay apologetically in an appendix. He could not be sure that they would not seem trivial in comparison to matters of state. This book was published in 1836. Macaulay reviewed it in the *Edinburgh Review* for October, 1838, and took occasion to give a vivid sketch of Dorothy and her lover. Macaulay's article led Mr. Edward Abbot Parry to read Courtenay's extracts from the letters and to weave them together into a kind of story, which was published in April, 1886, in *The English Illustrated Magazine*. This magazine fell into the hands of Mrs. S. R. Longe who had had access to the original letters and had copied them with minute accuracy. These letters were offered to Mr. Parry

[1] Giffard, Lady Martha: *Her Life and Letters*, p. 27.

for publication and were accordingly brought out, though with omissions, in 1888.[1] In 1903 the letters were published in full. Thus, after escaping the vicissitudes of nearly two and a half centuries, these letters became a delight accessible to all.[2]

When Dorothy was twenty-one she went with her brother to France. At the Isle of Wight they were joined by young Mr. William Temple who promptly fell in love with Dorothy because of the spirited way she met a difficult situation. Her brother had written on the window pane at the inn some phrases objectionable to the Puritans, and the whole party was arrested. Then Dorothy, relying upon the general chivalrous attitude towards women, took the blame upon herself, and they were set free. The courtship thus begun was destined to last seven years. There were few meetings and the correspondence was carried on with all possible secrecy, for both the Osbornes and the Temples had other plans for the young people. It was a difficult seven years for Dorothy. The Osbornes lived at Chicksands Priory in Bedfordshire, a lonely and not very interesting region. Dorothy's mother died in 1650. After a long illness, during which she was his constant attendant, her father died in 1654. During these years her brother was the only one of the family with her in the strange old house. And from him came her chief trial, for it was the effort of his life to see her well married. Young men, middle-aged men, old men, aspired to be Mistress Dorothy's "servants." The ancient Priory saw a train of lovers sent away unsatisfied. Dorothy gave all sorts of reasons for her fastidious and critical at-

[1] Osborne, Dorothy: *Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.* "Introduction."

[2] That the letters narrowly escaped destruction is indicated by the following letter written by Mrs. Sarah Osborne in 1770 to Sir George Osborne, Dorothy's great-nephew: "Mrs. Temple did lend me these letters to read with injunction not to shew them. I very much doubt if she would send them to London. . . . Most of these letters were in the tender stile with sensible sentiments, indeed I believe Mrs. Temple burnt them after I had read them, she said she would, as indeed I think she should, such letters can never be exposed to advantage, there were many wrote after her marriage, they soon grew tame and flat to what was before."

titude towards her suitors — all reasons but the real one. Mr. Temple had no assured income, Dorothy but a small dowry, and no families in their rank of life could be expected to sanction so imprudent a choice. In the meantime silence and faithfulness was the only resource of the impecunious lovers. It was a hard fate, but not without compensations for later generations, for if they had married happily on coming out of France there would have been no bundle of letters in the old cabinet at Sheen.

There are various indications that Dorothy had numerous correspondents. That they did not save her letters is our great loss, for we can imagine few more delightful ways of being inducted into the life of the times than through the letters of Mistress Dorothy. The "Matchless Orinda" was one of her correspondents, but only one letter arising out of this friendship has been preserved. It may justly be quoted entire because it serves to unite the two most interesting women of the time, and because it shows how Mrs. Philips, in the plentitude of her fame, with Dublin dramatic triumphs fresh upon her, with the aristocracy of London adding leaves to her laurel crown, courted the quiet Mrs. Temple living the most retired and domestic of lives at Sheen. This letter has the further pathetic interest of being one of the last Orinda wrote, for when she reached London on this visit she had so longed for she fell a victim to that most dreaded scourge, the small-pox:

Deare Madam, — You treat me in your letters so much to my advantage and above my merit that I am almost affray'd to tell you how exceedingly I am pleased with them lesst you should attribute yt contentment to ye delight I take in being praised whereas I am extreamely deceived if that be ye ground of it, though I confess it is not free from vanity. I can not choose but be proud of being owned by soe valuable a person as you are, and one whom all my inclinations carry me to honour and love at a very great rate, and you will find by the trouble I last gave you of this kind how impossible it will be for you to be rid of an importunity which you have much encourag'd and how much your late silence alarm'd one yt is soe much concern'd for ye honour you doe her in allowing her to hope you will frequently let her know she hath some room in ye particular favour, I hope you

have pardon'd me that complaint and allow'd a little jealousy to that great passion I have for you and that I shall with some more assurance come to thank you for this last favour of 12th instant, and must beg you to believe that if my convent were in Cataya and I a recluse by vow to it, yet I should never attain mortification enough to be able willingly to deny myself the great entertainment of your correspondance, which seems to remove me out of a solitary religious house on ye mountains and place me in the most advantageous prospect upon both court and town and give me right to a better place than of either, and that madam is your friendship, which is so great a present, that there is but one way to make it more valuable and yt is by making it less ceremonious and by using me with a freedom that may give me more access into your heart and this beg from you with a great earnestness, and will promise you that whatsoever liberties of that kind you allow me, yt I will never so much abase that goodness as to press mine own advantages further than you shall permit or lessen any of the respect I ow you, by the less formal approaches I desire to make to you who though I esteem above most of the world yet I love yet more.[1]

Orinda was a letter-writer of no mean ability herself, but she wrote with something of a professional tone, and possibly with an eye to numerous readers. It was only Dorothy that could make town and court live again. Macaulay's philippics against "the dignity of history" and his eulogy of the social value of such letters as Dorothy's must find approval from every one who tries to revivify a forgotten era. Dorothy was an acute observer. If the novel of domestic life had been in existence in her day she would have found the natural place for her clever and slightly caustic pen. The successive suitors and various dull visitors at Chicksands could have had little suspicion of the merry and facile wit that was serving up their oddities for the amusement of her lover. Furthermore, Dorothy was an inveterate reader, and a reader with mental reactions, an independent judgment, and a skill in witty comment. The general tone of the letters is a delightful mixture of humor, tenderness, and coquetry. No writing of the time was more unaffectedly human. And there were counsels of prudence and of good sense,

[1] Giffard, Lady: *Her Life and Letters*, pp. 38–39.

bits of worldly wisdom and penetrating knowledge of human foibles. And with it all was the charm of style. When Mr. Temple wishes to know how she spends her day she outlines the slow-moving hours and closes with this delicate picture of evening:

The heat of the day is spent in reading or working, and about six or seven o'clock I walk out into a common that lies hard by the house, where a great many young wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads. I go to them and compare their voices and beauties to some ancient shepherdesses that I have read of, and find a vast difference there: but, trust me, I think these are as innocent as those could be. I talk to them and find they want nothing to make them the happiest people in the world but the knowledge that they are so. Most commonly when we are in the midst of our discourse, one looks about her, and spies her cows going into the corn, and then away they all run as if they had wings to their heels. I, that am not so nimble, stay behind; and when I see them driving home their cattle, I think 't is time for me to return too. When I have supped, I go into the garden, and so to the side of a small river that runs by it, when I sit down and wish you were with me (you had best say this is not kind neither). In earnest, 't is a pleasant place, and would be much more so to me if I had your company. I sit there sometimes till I am lost with thinking; and were it not for some cruel thoughts of the crossness of our fortunes that will not let me sleep there, I should forget that there were such a thing to be done as going to bed.[1]

Dorothy's easy, natural tone was quite in accord with her theory of letter-writing. She writes to Mr. Temple:

All letters, methinks, should be free and easy as one's discourse, not studied like an oration, nor made up of hard words like a charm. 'T is an admirable thing to see how some people will labour to find terms that will obscure a plain sense, like a gentleman I knew who would never say "the weather grew cold," but that "winter begins to salute us." I have no patience for such coxcombs, and cannot blame an old uncle of mine who threw the standish at his man's head because he writ a letter for him, where instead of saying (as his master bid him) that "he had the gout in his hand" he said "that the gout would not permit him to put pen to paper." The fellow thought he had mended it mightily, and that putting pen to paper was much better than plain writing!

[1] *Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple*, p. 100.

How in 1652–54 did Dorothy escape the grand style? She was steeped in romances and she read Jeremy Taylor with delight. But there are no preciosities, no attempted elaborateness or ornamentation or splendor in her style. She might have written after the moderns had won their victory so direct and straightforward is her speech. But the infinite charm of her letters belongs to no age. It is the expression of a personality.

We cannot leave Dorothy Osborne's letters without feeling defrauded that there are so few of them. After their marriage in 1655 the Temples lived five years in Ireland. Sir William's importance in state affairs led to a later residence in Brussels and at The Hague. After 1681 they lived in retirement at Moor Park and Swift and Stella were of their household. What opportunities for letters if Dorothy had only been as indefatigable as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu! But except for a few personal notes from Sheen in 1665–67, Dorothy fades from our sight. Did accumulated sorrows sap her energy and dim her joyous courage? She had nine children. Seven of them died in infancy. Her daughter died of small-pox. Her son committed suicide because of fancied inability to perform a diplomatic mission. It is said that at some time during the years 1689–94 Queen Mary and Dorothy kept up a continuous correspondence. If such letters were written there is now no trace of them. The latest published letter from Dorothy is in 1689 in response to some expression of condolence for the death of her son. It is difficult to recognize in this subdued and dignified, almost cold and stately lady, the sparkling and mischievous Dorothy of the earlier letters.

Lady Pakington (d. 1679)

Just about contemporary with Mrs. Philips and the Duchess of Newcastle was a remarkable woman of quite another type. This was Lady Pakington, the daughter of Lord Coventry. If, as was long supposed, she wrote the series of books of which *The Whole Duty of Man* was one, that fact would place her very high in the ranks of seven-

teenth-century authors. With the consensus of expert opinion now against the ascription of these books to her, she yet holds an important place among learned women.[1] Dr. George Hickes, whose deanery was near Westwood, the home of Sir John Pakington, and who was intimate with the family, in the Preface to his *Thesaurus* which was inscribed to Sir John, gives a "character" of Lady Pakington in which he says she was trained in her youth by "the excellently learned Sir Norton Knatchbull," and that later in life she was mistress of all the learning, good judgment, sound thinking, and piety necessary to have been the author of the famous *Whole Duty of Man*. He says that noted divines declared her as learned in the history of pagan and Christian systems of thought as were they themselves; and that she knew concerning the antiquities of her own county "almost as much as the greatest proficients in that kind of knowledge." Especially did Dr. Hickes comment on her "talent for speaking correctly, pertinently, clearly, and gracefully," and on "her evenness of style and consistent manner of writing." No woman of the period came nearer being the tutelary deity of a coterie than did Lady Pakington. Her loyalty to the Church of England and to the Stuart cause made of her beautiful home at Westwood during the Protectorate a natural resort for royalist divines. Dr. Hammond, Bishop Fell, Bishop Morley, Bishop Pearson, Bishop Henchman, Bishop Gunning, were among those whose friendship and esteem she had acquired by her "great virtues and eminent attainments in knowledge." Before the Restoration she held a kind of Church of England salon, and though most of the men who frequented it were given benefices by Charles II and so scattered through England, Lady Pakington, by letter and occasional personal intercourse, kept up the friendships of the earlier days, through the nineteen years that she lived after the Restoration. And even if she did not write *The Whole Duty of Man* (1657) and the series that followed it, these books arose from the discussions held at Westwood.

[1] Ballard gives the arguments in favor of Lady Pakington.

Mary Boyle, the Countess of Warwick (1624-1678)

The Countess of Warwick is best known from her *Diary*, her *Autobiography*, and the sermon preached at her funeral by Dr. Anthony Walker, rector of Fyfield in Essex. The *Diary* was kept from July, 1666, till 1678. The part from 1666 to 1672 was published in 1847 by the Religious Tract Society with a memoir. The remainder is among the manuscripts in the British Museum.[1] Her *Autobiography*, under the title, *Some Specialties in the Life of M. Warwicke*, was published by the Percy Society in 1848.[2] Dr. Walker's sermon, entitled *The Virtuous Woman found, her loss bewailed, and character exemplified*, etc., was published in 1678 and 1687.[3]

Mary Boyle was married to Mr. Rich, afterwards Earl of Warwick, when she was but fifteen. Her life before that time she thus describes: "I was married into my husband's family, as vain, as idle, and as inconsiderate a person as possible, minding nothing but curious dressing and fond and rich clothes, and spending my precious time in nothing else but reading romances, and in reading and seeing plays, and in going to court, and Hide Park and Spring Garden; and I was so fond of the court, that I had taken a secret resolution that if my father died, and I was mistress of myself, I would become a courtier." [4] But by the time she was twenty-one a complete change was manifest. She became exceedingly devout. There is no more romance reading. The books on her chosen list are "St. Bernard, George Herbert, Jeremy Taylor, Baxter, Samuel Rutherford Clarke, the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, John Janeway's *Dying*, Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, Cayley's *Glimpses of Eternity*." [5] Her writing was all religious in tone. Rules for a Holy Life, Occasional Meditations, and Pious Reflections were among the topics she found most congenial. The *Specialties in the Life of*

[1] Johnstone, Grace: *Leading Women of the Restoration*, p. 101.

[2] *Percy Society Publications*, vol. XXII. See also biographies of the Countess of Warwick by C. Fell Smith (1901) and Mary Palgrave (1901).

[3] *Term Catalogues.*

[4] *Autobiography* (*Percy Society Publications*, vol. XXII, p. 21).

[5] Godfrey, Elizabeth: *Social Life under the Stuarts*, p. 138.

M. Warwicke shows the intensity of her struggle after spiritual perfection and her genuine aloofness from the gay and splendid scenes in which her rank compelled her to bear a part. The most ordinary occurrences, such as "lighting many candles at once," or "drawing the window-curtains to prevent the sun's putting out the fire," suggested pious reflections. At a glorious banquet at Whitehall "the trumpets sounding in the midst of all that great show" put mortifying thoughts into her mind and made her consider "what if the trump of God should now sound?" In a meditation entitled "Upon looking out of my window at Chelsea, upon the Thames," her delight in the sweet river when it is calm and serene, and her dislike of it — so that she shut her window and ceased to look — when it was rough, is moralized into the charm of calm and patient people as against those of turbulent passions.[1]

Lady Warwick's writings exhibit none of the joyous or fervent aspects of religion. In the midst of domestic trials, surrounded by an alien life, she was steadily tutoring her own heart, subduing her sins, following a high ideal. Dr. Walker in his sermon gives an example of seventeenth-century pulpit oratory in his effort adequately to praise this great lady, as conspicuous for goodness as for her rank and wealth: "An hundred mouths, and a thousand tongues though they all flowed with nectar, would be too few to praise her." "Oh," he exclaims, "for a Chrysostom's mouth, for an angel's tongue, to describe this terrestrial seraphine; or a ray of light condensed into a pencil, and made tactile, to give you this glorious child of light in *viva effigie*."

Lucy Apsley, Mrs. Hutchinson (1620- ?)

That Lucy Hutchinson had written a life of her husband was known by many people and there were frequent requests in the eighteenth century that so valuable a historical document should be made accessible to the public. Mrs. Catherine Macaulay was one of those urgent in this matter, but without avail.[2] It was not till

[1] Johnstone, Grace: *Leading Women of the Restoration*, pp. 107, 117.
[2] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (Bohn ed.), Preface, p. ix.

the manuscript came into the possession of the Reverend Julius Hutchinson that it was published. After the first edition in 1806 three editions appeared in four years. Some other writings besides the *Memoirs* were found among the papers of Mrs. Hutchinson. Of these the precious *Autobiography* was but a fragment. It not only closed abruptly, but leaves had been torn out. But from what remains we get one of the few accounts of the home education of girls in the first half of the seventeenth century. Her father and mother, extremely glad to welcome a girl after three sons, "applied all their cares and spared no cost" in her education. She describes this education as follows:

By the time I was four years old I read English perfectly, and having a great memory, I was carried to sermons; and while I was very young could remember and repeat them exactly, and being caressed, the love of praise tickled me, and made me attend more heedfully. When I was about seven years of age, I remember I had at one time eight tutors in several qualities, languages, music, dancing, writing and needle-work; but my genius was quite averse from all but my book, and that I was so eager of, that my mother, thinking it prejudiced my health, would moderate me in it; yet this rather animated me than kept me back, and every moment I could steal from my play I would employ in any book I could find, when my own were locked up from me. After dinner and supper I still had an hour allowed me to play, and then I would steal into some hole or other to read. My father would have me learn Latin, and I was so apt that I outstripped my brothers who were at school, although my father's chaplain, that was my tutor was a pitiful dull fellow. My brothers, who had a great deal of wit, had some emulation at the progress I made in my learning, which very well pleased my father; though my mother would have been contented if I had not so wholly addicted myself to that as to neglect my other qualities. As for music and dancing, I profited very little in them, and would never practise my lute or harpsichords but when my masters were with me; and for my needle I absolutely hated it. Play among other children I despised, and when I was forced to entertain such as came to visit me, I tired them with more grave instructions than their mothers, and plucked all their babies to pieces, and kept the children in such awe, that they were glad when I entertained myself with elder company; to whom I was very acceptable, and living in the house with many persons that had a great deal of

MRS. LUCY HUTCHINSON AND HER SON

From an engraving in *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, 1808

wit, and very profitable serious discourses being frequent at my father's table and in my mother's drawing-room, I was very attentive to all, and gathered up things that I would utter again, to great admiration of many that took my memory and imitation for wit. It pleased God that, through the good instructions of my mother, and the sermons she carried me to, I was convinced that the knowledge of God was the most excellent study, and accordingly applied myself to it, and to practise as I was taught. I used to exhort my mother's maids much, and to turn their idle discourses to good subjects: but I thought, when I had done this on the Lord's day, and every day performed my due tasks of reading and praying, that then I was free to anything that was not sin.[1]

Elsewhere she notes other elements of her education. She says that as soon as she was weaned, a Frenchwoman was taken to be her dry-nurse and she was taught to speak French and English together. At the siege of Nottingham Castle Mrs. Hutchinson is represented as acting the part of a surgeon. This knowledge may doubtless be referred to instructions by her mother. Sir Allen Apsley, Lucy's father, was lieutenant of the Tower of London during her youth, and Mrs. Apsley was very generous and humane to the prisoners. Her daughter says of her:

What my father allowed her she spent not in vanities, although she had what was rich and requisite upon occasions, but she laid most of it out in pious and charitable uses. Sir Walter Raleigh and Mr. Ruthin being prisoners in the Tower, and addicting themselves to chemistry, she suffered them to make rare experiments at her cost, partly to comfort and divert the poor prisoners, and partly to gain the knowledge of their experiments, and the medicines to help such poor people as were not able to seek physicians. By these means she acquired a great deal of skill, which was very profitable to many all her life.[2]

The love story of Lucy Apsley and Colonel Hutchinson is curiously interwoven with her learning. When Lucy was sixteen her mother took her into Wiltshire in pursuance of a contemplated marriage contract and left a younger sister at a house where she was "tabled for the practice of her lute."

[1] Hutchinson, Mrs. Lucy: *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 16.
[2] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 14.

Mr. Hutchinson, "tabled" at the same house, was attracted by the vivacious child, and frequently accompanied her when she went over to her mother's house. On one of these occasions he saw some Latin books and was much interested to find that they belonged to Lucy. Then he heard that this Lucy was "reserved and studious," then that she composed songs above "the ordinary reach of a she-wit," then that she had "sense above the rest," but that she "shunned the converse of men as a plague." Strangely enough, these accounts, or some magic, or the hand of Providence, plunged Mr. Hutchinson into the despairs and ardors of love even before he had seen the lady. On her return, the proposed marriage contract not having been completed, he daily frequented her mother's house, and for six weeks "in the sweet season of the spring" they had opportunity for converse with each other. During this period some envious ladies endeavored to break the friendship by telling him that Lucy neglected her dress and all womanish ornaments, giving herself up wholly to study and writing. But since his love had owed its inception to a sight of her Latin books, and had been stimulated by hearing her poetry, these insinuations did not interfere with what his wife calls "a more handsome management of love than the best romances describe." [1]

Somewhat later Lucy Hutchinson's love of learning led her to at least a slight knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. That she kept up her Latin is shown by the fact that she translated part of the *Æneid*. In her early married life she found scholastic means to mitigate the monotony of the needlework she loathed. Out of a "youthful curiosity to understand things she had heard so much of at second-hand" she translated six books of *Lucretius* into verse, accomplishing this task, she says, "in a room where my children practised the several qualities they were taught with their tutors, and I numbered the syllables of my translation by the threads of the canvas I wrought in, and set them down with a pen and ink that stood by me."

There was not, however, in Mrs. Hutchinson's life much op-

[1] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, pp. 56–62.

portunity for scenes so domestic as this. She was married to Mr. Hutchinson in 1638. By 1642 her husband was definitely committed to the side of the Puritans, and the rest of their life till his death in 1664 was one of anxiety, conflict, and baffled high endeavor. But it was also a life of achievement and excitement, and constantly sweetened and stimulated by extraordinary affection between husband and wife. When at his death she retired to the family home at Owthorpe the days must have looked very blank and empty to the heroine of Nottingham Castle. Not even the care of her eight children could keep her mind from dwelling on the past. The message her husband sent her from his death-bed in the prison, "Let her, as she is above other women, show herself, on this occasion, a good Christian, and above other women,"[1] helped her to restrain extreme signs of grief, but her heart and mind were with him. And the mechanic exercise that dulled her grief was the writing of his *Life*. She had kept a rough sort of diary and this was the basis for the longer work. The writing was done between 1664 and 1671 when Mrs. Hutchinson herself died. The work was addressed "To my Children" and its purpose was to make them know the character and deeds of their father. But the narrative goes much farther than that. It is a minute account of the persons and events of that portion of the Civil War especially connected with Nottingham. She writes as an eye-witness and a participant. She wields a pen vigorous, racy, and unafraid. She had a genius for picturesque characterization, and her scornful descriptions of cowards and traitors are veiled by no feminine softness of phrase. When describing such treacherous members of the Parliament Party as Charles White and Chadwick and his wife her vocabulary of abuse is unstinted. But she is equally fluent in her account of heroes such as Colonel Thornhagh. The intrigues, the factions, the cross-currents, within the Puritan Party are as minutely analyzed and laid open as is the general contest between King and Parliament. Furthermore, the book is read-

[1] *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 478.

able from beginning to end. It moves with the rapidity of a novel of adventure. Mr. A. H. Upham[1] has analyzed Mrs. Hutchinson's work to show that it was probably suggested by the Duchess of Newcastle's *Life* of her husband, and that, further, the general plan and even the choice of detail were guided by the Duchess's *Memoir*. The *Life* of the Duke of Newcastle, though not published till 1667, was written in 1665, and since the two families were neighbors, and knew each other well, it might easily be that Mrs. Hutchinson was acquainted with the work of the Duchess in manuscript. This ingenious theory is maintained by citations of passages showing numerous similarities. But the fact remains that Mrs. Hutchinson's *Memoir* moves forward as from the force of an original impulse, nobly religious, shrewd, caustic, affectionate, and naïve. It was, in subject-matter and style, a notable achievement, and while succeeding in the amplest measure in its purpose of exalting Colonel Hutchinson's memory, quite as deservedly gives to Mrs. Hutchinson her own unsought and higher pinnacle of fame.

Ann Harrison, Lady Fanshawe (1625-1680)

A few years before her death Lady Fanshawe wrote for her son a narrative of her life. Of her own education she says: "Now it is necessary to say something of my mother's education of me, which was with all the advantages that time afforded, both for working all sorts of fine works with my needle, and learning French, singing, (the) lute, the virginals, and dancing; and, notwithstanding I learned as well as most did, yet I was wild to that degree that the hours of my beloved recreation took up too much of my time; for I loved riding in the first place, and running, and all active pastimes; and in fine I was what we graver people call a hoyting girl. But to be just to myself I never did mischief to myself or other people, nor one immodest action or word in my life; but skipping and activity was my delight. But upon my mother's death and as an offering to

[1] *Anglia:* vol. 36, "Lucy Hutchinson and the Duchess of Newcastle."

LADY FANSHAWE

From an engraving in *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe*, London, 1830

her memory I flung away those little childishnesses that formerly possessed me and by my father's command took upon me the charge of his house and family, which I so ordered by my excellent mother's example as found acceptance in his sight." [1] At her mother's death Ann was "fifteen years and three months" old, and the household she took charge of was one "of plenty and hospitality," her father having a very great estate. In 1644 she married Sir Richard Fanshawe to whom she was passionately devoted during the twenty-six troubled years of their life together. She says: "Glory be to God, we never had but one mind throughout our lives, our souls were wrapped up in each other, our aims and designs one, and our resentments one. We so studied one the other that we knew each other's mind by our looks; whatever was real happiness God gave it me in him." [2]

When Lady Fanshawe wrote her *Memoirs*, her son Richard, her youngest child, was about ten or twelve years old. Her purpose apparently was to recount all the facts of the eventful family career. The narrative, except for an occasional outburst, was uncolored by emotion. One series of events recorded is the births and deaths of children. In a period of twenty years Lady Fanshawe had fourteen children and she records the deaths of nine of them. This would seem to be suffering and sorrow enough for one life. But we get an added conception of the family vicissitudes when we discover that no two of the fourteen children were born in the same house, and no two of the nine who died were buried in the same churchyard. Madrid, Lisbon, Paris, Yorkshire, Kent, Hertfordshire, Oxford, were places of sad memory to the bereaved mother. Yet, except in the cases of "little Nan" and the first Richard, there is simply a recital of facts and dates. Lady Fanshawe was but fifty-five when she died, but she had gone through so much that a re-living of past emotions as well as a recalling of facts would have made the writing of the *Memoirs* an impos-

[1] *The Memoirs of Ann, Lady Fanshawe, 1600–1672*, p. 22.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

sibility. As a narrative of the externals of life the story has singular interest. It abounds in striking contrasts. Money stringency, mishaps by land and sea, sicknesses, imprisonments, deaths, mingle strangely with official splendors, royal gifts, rich furnishings, gorgeous apparel. It is personal in tone, with as little historical detail as was consistent with carrying the narrative forward. And for that reason it is of importance today as a closer record of life than historians of the Civil War or of the reign of Charles II are likely to give.

Margaret Blagge, Mrs. Godolphin (1652-1678)

The most interesting personality in this early group is the beautiful Mrs.[1] Margaret Blagge. She is the supreme example of a developed religious sense in the court of Charles II. She was not driven to a life of devotion through a grief-enshrouded heart. Reli-

[1] The use of "Miss" and "Mrs." between 1660 and 1750, and even later, is often confusing. The use of "Mrs." for all reputable persons of the female sex, even children, prevailed during the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century. On the tombstone of Milton's daughter, a child under six months we read, "1657. Mar. 20. Mrs. Kathern Milton." (*Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, vol. VII, p. 494.) *A Continuation of Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, Written by a Young Gentlewoman, Miss A. W.* (1651, 2d edition, 1690), is a striking exception. There was sometimes a distinction between the married and the unmarried in that the latter had the Christian name after the "Mrs." as when Evelyn speaks of "Mrs. Margaret Blagge," but this custom was by no means invariable. The prefix "Miss" began soon after the Restoration to be used as a term of reproach. January 9, 1662, Evelyn says of Roxalana, "She being taken to be ye Earl of Oxford's *Misse* (as at this time they began to call lewd women)." In 1669 Flecknoe, in *Epigrams of All Sorts*, wrote a poem to Mary Davis, the King's mistress, under the title "To Miss Davis." In 1675 appeared "*The 'Miss' displayed; with all her Wheadling Arts and circumventions, By the Author of the First Part of the 'English Rogue.'*" In 1683, in Miss Barber's *Poems*, was a poem entitled "To the Town Miss," and in one of her novels (about 1715) she speaks of the "Town Miss" who pretends to modesty. In 1690 we find the *Dutch Whore, or, the Miss of Amsterdam.*

"Miss" in a reputable sense belonged to very young girls. In 1675 Lady Russell speaks of her daughter Rachel, who was then four years old, as "our Miss." When the little girl is thirteen her grandfather calls her "Mrs. Rachel." (*Lady Russell's Letters*, vol. I, pp. 14, 139.) In 1723, in *The Gentleman Instructed*, we read "As soon as Reason begins to sparkle, Miss is led to the drawing-room." The proper age for "Miss" seems a little advanced in two quotations made by Mr. Aitkin (*Life of Steele*, vol. I, p. 162) from *Lillie's Original and Genuine Letters sent to the Tatler and Spectator.* One young lady says: "Being arrived at sixteen I have left the boarding-school, and now

gion was to her joy and ecstasy. John Evelyn recorded in his Diary a determination to consecrate the worthy life of Margaret Blagge to posterity, and when he died in 1706 he left a list of "things I would write out fair and reform if I had leisure," among them being the *Life of Mrs. Godolphin.* This manuscript was first published in 1847. It records a life of singular charm and interest. Yet the facts of Margaret Blagge's life are meager enough. She was born in 1652; was early in France with the Countess of Guildford; when scarcely twelve became maid of honor to the Duchess of York; and then on the death of the Duchess in 1671 entered into the same service with Queen Catherine; in 1674, after a nine-year courtship, married Sidney Godolphin; and in 1678 died in child-birth. It is her inner life that counts, and that life would have left small record had

having assumed the title of Madam instead of Miss am come home." A second quotation seems to indicate a still further extension of the proper age for Miss; "Let no woman after the known age of twenty-one presume to admit of her being called Miss unless she can fairly prove she is not out of her sampler."

Actresses were usually called "Mrs." in the bills. The first use of "Miss" that I can find is in 1685 in D'Urfey's *Commonwealth of Women*, where a part was played by "Miss Nanny" (Genest: *Some Account of the English Stage*, vol. I, p. 443). In D'Urfey's *Don Quixote* Altesidora was played by "Miss Cross." Genest (vol. II, p. 70) says: "She was called *Miss* because she was quite a girl . . . she was afterwards called Mrs. Cross . . . the case was the same with several other actresses — Cibber in *The Lady's Last Stake* calls two of the female characters *Miss* Notable and *Mrs.* Conquest, tho' they are both unmarried — but one is a girl and the other a woman." "Miss Cross" was "Mrs." on the bills within a year. "Miss Younger" came into the house at seven years old. Later she became "Mrs. Younger." So with Miss Mountfort, Miss Santlow, Miss Sherburn, Miss Booth, Miss Rogers, and other young actresses who entered the theatrical profession between 1700–1715.

By 1750 "Miss" for unmarried women is pretty well established. The list of subscribers to Ballard's *Memoirs* (1752) contains many ladies called "Miss." *The Connoisseur*, November 25, 1754, said: "Every unmarried woman is now called 'Miss.'" But "Mrs." for reputable unmarried women beyond girlhood was occasionally used through the century. Elizabeth Carter was always "Mrs. Carter," while her friend Catharine Talbot, about the same age, was "Miss Talbot." In *Humphrey Clinker* (1771) Tabitha Bramble, though a spinster, is "Mrs." Sir Walter Scott called Joanna Baillie "Mrs." in the beginning of the nineteenth century. *Notes and Queries* (7th Series, vol. VII, pp. 104–256) calls attention to the fact that as late as 1889 "Mrs." was in many places considered the correct title for upper-class unmarried female servants.

not the beautiful young maid of honor chosen the wise and religious John Evelyn as her friendly counselor in her difficult attempt to maintain a life of purity and piety in the most dissolute court of Europe. Evelyn recounts the success of her devout life in these words: "Arethusa pass'd through all those turbulent waters without soe much as the least staine or tincture in her Chrystall; with her Piety grew up her Witt, which was soe sparkling, accompanyed with a Judgment and Eloquence so exterordinary, a Beauty and Ayre soe charmeing and lovely, in a word, an Address soe universally takeing, that, after a few years, the Court never saw or had seen such a Constellation of perfections amongst all their splendid Circles." [1] But though she was regarded as "a little miracle" at court, her heart was never there. To no young woman of the time were the pomp and glory of the world more alluringly open, but she turned instinctively from all such joys. She counted her beauty a snare and would never "trick and dress herself vpp . . . to be fine and ador'd." Lovers crowded about her, but she avoided the vain converse of gallants. Evelyn records her particular gift for mimicry, recitation, acting, but such talents she held in abeyance. At sixteen she acted in a court play, probably Dryden's *Indian Emperor*, with great success, but her growingly devout spirit came to abhor such recreations, so that when she was summoned by royal request to act in Crowne's *Calisto*, in 1674, even though the play was to be given all by ladies, and those the most illustrious in the land, it was a matter of almost tragic grief to her that her duty forbade a refusal. "To be herselfe an Actoresse . . . cost her not only great reluctancy but many teares." [2] Though she was decked with jewels worth £20,000, though she "trode the Stage with a surprizeing and admirable Aire," and though the whole theater was extolling her, she felt no transport, but, when an interval came, "retired into a Corner, reading a book of devotion." Not

[1] Evelyn, John: *Life of Mrs. Godolphin* (ed. Edward William Harcourt of Nuneham Park), p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

even the fact that she played the part of "Diana, the Goddess of Chastity," consoled her.

She had one real calling and that was to a religious life. As a child of seven, in France with the Countess of Guildford, though often "tempted by that By-Gott proselitesse to goe to Masse and be a papist," [1] she yet could maintain her own faith. Because of her spiritual precocity she was "admitted to the holy Sacrament when she was hardly Eleaven years of age." Though she disliked Catholicism, she praised nunneries, and would have chosen a retired life of devotion and good works, had not her love for Mr. Godolphin and the urgent advice of Mr. Evelyn restrained her. Nearly all her writing and reading were along religious lines. Mr. Evelyn says on this point:

> She has houres alsoe for reading historye and diversions of that nature; butt allwayes such as were choice, profitable and instructive, and she had devoured an incredible deale of that solid knowledge, and could accompt of it to admiration; soe as I have even beene astonished to find such an heape of excellent things and material observations collected and written with her owne hand, many of which (since her being with God) came to myne; for, besides a world of admirable prayers and pieces of flagrant devotion, meditations, and discourses on various subjects (which she compos'd), there was hardly a booke she read that she had not common placed, as it were, or taken some remarkable note of; add this to the Diary of her owne life, actions, resolutions, and other circumstances, of which I shall give some specimen. She had contracted the intire historye of the Scriptures, and the most illustrious examples, sentences, and precepts, digested under opposite and proper heads; and collected togeather the result of every Article of the Apostles' Creed, out of Bishop Pearson's excellent Treatise. I have allready spoken of her Sermon Notes: butt to give a just Account of her Letters, they are so many and in so excellent naturall and easy a style, that, as for their number, one would believe she did nothing else butt write, soe, for their weight and ingenuity, that she ought to doe nothing else; and soe easyly did her Invention flow, that I have seen her write a very long letter without once takeing off her pen (butt to dip it), and that with exterordinary Judgment.[2]

Her *Diary* is a delightfully spontaneous document. Here is one Resolution:

[1] Evelyn, John: *Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, p. 8. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

June the 2d.

I will nere play this halfe year butt att 3 penny omber, and then with one att halves. I will not I doe not vow, but I will not doe it; — what, loose mony att Cards, yet not give (to) the poore! 'T is robbing God, misspending tyme, and missimploying my Talent: three great Sinns. Three pounds would have kept three people from starveing a month: well, I will not play.[1]

Equally genuine and charming, but in more decorous and solemn fashion, is the letter in which she consecrated John Evelyn her friend. Indeed, the whole quaint and formal episode of the establishment of this remarkable friendship, seems incredibly pure and lovely when thought of as occurring in the court of which Grammont's *Memoirs* is a fair record. Evelyn wrote "a little master-piece of biography," partly because of his intimate knowledge of Mrs. Godolphin's spiritual experience and his personal affection for her, but also, in part, because his imagination was inevitably stimulated by the vision of a life so crystal clear in an environment so murky.

The versatility and intellectual energy of the Duchess of Newcastle, the quick wit and instinct for style in Dorothy Osborne's letters, the grave and sincere religious feeling coupled with considerable theological learning on the part of women in influential positions like Margaret Blagge, Lady Pakington, and Lady Warwick, the vivid social and political pictures in the biographies by Mrs. Hutchinson and Lady Fanshawe, the gay playing with *belles lettres* in Mary North's little society, and especially the extraordinary vogue of Mrs. Philips, are sufficient indications, as we look back over the period, that a new spirit was awake. It reads now almost as if there were a general and brilliant opening of literary pursuits to women. But it is also significant to recall that Mrs. Philips and the Duchess of Newcastle were the only two women whose ability or learned tastes were known at the time beyond their own small private circle. In reality the work was sporadic, secluded, uninfluential. And the fame even of the Duchess of Newcastle and Mrs.

[1] Evelyn, John: *Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, p. 215.

Philips is hardly established before 1660. It is with the Restoration that the more varied and public activities begin.

2. The Century following the Restoration

The period to be here presented in detail is the century following the Restoration. During this period the work of women spreads out in new directions. Not only is there a greater variety in the kinds of writing, but other forms of self-expression are entered upon. In this more complicated era the strictly chronological method becomes confusing. It seems more desirable to take up the work under different species, keeping to chronological development within each species.

Two kinds of new work by women, acting and painting, demand brief preliminary notice. Though possibly not within the category of learned occupations they must yet be recognized as of great importance in the new life opening before women.

Actresses

Charles II had in France been familiar with the custom of having women on the stage, and when he issued his two patents to Davenant and Killigrew he inserted the famous clause, "We do permit and give leave from this time to come that all women's parts be acted by women." Mrs. Coleman had taken the part of Ianthe in Davenant's *Siege of Rhodes* in 1656, but this was not a regular play. It was more of the nature of an opera or spectacle. The first woman to act on the public stage in England was probably the actress who played Desdemona, December 8, 1660. "J. Jordan" wrote a prologue to introduce her as "the first woman that came to act on the stage," but he did not give her name.[1]

The theatrical novelty initiated by this unknown actress was far-reaching in its effects. Through the ensuing years a constantly increasing number of women followed the lure of the stage. No other opportunity open to the ambition of

[1] Fitzgerald: *History of the English Stage*, vol. I, pp. 60–62.

women met with so eager a response, or could number so many aspirants, or could register success so unqualified. Yet as we read of these early English actresses we hardly think of acting as a profession or of them as artists. They were in no sense students of the parts they played. Beauty, youth, high spirits, a certain native endowment of wit or boldness, ability to sing a song or dance a jig, seemed to meet all the demands of audiences too much delighted with the mere fact of seeing women on the stage to be over-critical of their technique or interpretation. Moreover, the runs of plays were short, three days being about the average, so there was hardly time to work up finished productions. The stage tenure of most of the actresses was also brief, hardly more than a prelude to the social and domestic irregularities of their later lives. Cunningham names Mrs. Betterton as the only actress of Charles II's day who was not mistress to some man at court. "Frailties," as they were euphemistically called, became so normally associated with actresses that Anne Bracegirdle excited incredulous surprise by her reputed purity of life, and she was presented by the noblemen of her day with a purse of eight hundred guineas in recognition of her virtue.[1] The immorality of these early

[1] "Gildon, in the Comparison between the two stages, 1702, attacks Mrs. Bracegirdle's private character.

"'*Sullen.* But does that Romantick Virgin still keep up her reputation?'

"'*Critick.* D' ye mean her reputation for acting?'

"'*Sullen.* I do; but if I were to be saved for believing that single article, I could not do it: 't is all, all a juggle, 't is legerdemain; the best on 't is, she falls into good hands, and the secrecy of the intrigue secures her; but as to her innocence, I believe no more on 't than I believe of John Mandevil.'

"Tom Brown, in his description of the playhouse, is still more severe on Mrs. Bracegirdle. . . . Among Tom Brown's Letters from the Dead to the Living, there is one from Mrs. Behn to the famous Virgin Actress — and another from the Virgin to Mrs. Behn.

"Gildon and Tom Brown seem to have had no foundation for their ill nature, but the extreme difficulty with which an actress at this period of the stage must have preserved her chastity.

"Mrs. Bracegirdle was perhaps a woman of cold constitution.

"Anthony Aston says — 'Mrs. Bracegirdle, that Diana of the stage, had many assailants on her virtue, as Lord Lovelace and Mr. Congreve, the last of which had her company most; but she ever resisted his vicious attacks, and,

actresses, girls of no rigorous professional training and no professional standards, is quite intelligible. In appearing before the public at all they broke so many conventions, defied the feminine ideal so completely, that a few steps further in pursuit of flattery and luxurious living hardly seemed to count. As actresses they were at once under a moral stigma anyhow, so far as the soberer part of the community was concerned, and they naturally followed the path of least resistance and accepted the morality of the court of the merry monarch, a court where virtue with her "lean and scare-crow face" seldom intruded. The unfortunate outcome of the turpitude of the Restoration actresses is that they built up in the public mind a prejudice against actresses as a class, a prejudice which affected later even such women as Mrs. Betterton, Mrs. Bracegirdle, Mrs. Cibber, or Mrs. Siddons. But it must not be forgotten that they served the cause of women by opening the way to a new and important profession, a profession in which women have no handicaps. The stage has been represented by more women of genius, and has given to women more unstinted recognition in fame and money, than have any of the other forms of public activity into which women have so far been admitted, except, possibly, in late years, administrative work in social service.

It is unnecessary, in this study, to carry the account of the actresses into further detail, or further down the century. The history of the part women took on the seventeenth and eighteenth century stage would make a volume of itself. And since it was many years before acting was connected with any

yet was always uneasy at his leaving her — she was very shy of Lord Lovelace's company, as being an engaging man, who drest well; and as, every day, his servant came to her, to ask her how she did, she always return'd her answer in the most obeisant words and behavior, that she was indifferent well, she humbly thanked his Lordship . . . her virtue had its reward, both in applause and specie; for it happen'd, that as the Dukes of Dorset and Devonshire, Lord Hallifax, and other Nobles, over a bottle, were extolling Mrs. Bracegirdle's virtuous behavior, "Come," says Lord Hallilfax — "You all commend her virtue, etc., but why do we not present this incomparable woman with something worthy her acceptance?" — his Lordship deposited 200 guineas, which the rest made up to 800, and sent to her with encomiums on her virtue.'" (Genest: *Some Account of the English Stage*, vol. II, pp. 376–78.)

critical or intellectual conception of the plays represented, it may suffice here to leave this portion of the new work of women with the mere announcement of its inception.

Artists

To acting we may add another new realm, that of painting. The earliest woman portrait-painter on record in England is Anne Carlisle, who died about 1680. In 1658 Sir William Sanderson, in his *Graphice*, commenting on the artists then in England, said, "And in Oyl Colours we have a vertuous example in that worthy Artist, Mrs. Carlisle." In the notes left by Vertue to Walpole was a statement that he had seen in about 1730 the portrait Mrs. Carlisle had painted of herself. Her chief work was in copying the paintings of Italian masters, or, according to a fashion of the times, reproducing them in miniature. It is said that Charles I admired her work so warmly that he presented to her and Van Dyck ultramarine to the value of five hundred pounds.[1]

Of more distinguished ability was Mary Beale (1637–1697),[2] who is said to have studied either with Sir Peter Lely or Robert Walker. At least she watched Lely paint and thereby gained some of his technique. She worked in oils, water-colors, and crayons. Through Sir Peter Lely she was given access to some of the best works of Van Dyck and in copying these gained a training somewhat similar to that given most artists by sojourns in Italy or Holland. There are in the English National Portrait Gallery portraits by her of Charles II and Abraham Cowley. At Knole is her portrait of John Milton; at Woburn Abbey, one of the Duke of Monmouth; Archbishop Tillotson, Henry, Duke of Norfolk, Dr. Sydenham, Dr. Croone, Bishop Wilkins, are among those who sat to her. No other English portrait-painter of the period had so distinguished a clientèle or is represented by so many canvases in English galleries.

[1] Walpole, Horace: *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. II, p. 381.

[2] Walpole, Horace: *Anecdotes of Painting*, vol. II, 537–44; Pilkington: *Dictionary of Painters*, 1770; *Biographia Britannica*, vol. II, p. 30; Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. II.

Her success may be measured, in part, by her financial returns. In a pocket-book kept by her husband in 1672 is this entry: "Received this year, for pictures done by my dearest heart, 202*l.* 5*s.*" The receipts for 1674 were 216*l.* 5*s.*; and for 1677, 429*l.* She was still painting important portraits in 1691, for we find in the *Term Catalogue* for Michaelmas of that year the announcement of "The true Effigies of his Grace, John, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. Engraven by Rob. White on a large sheet of Paper, from the Original lately painted by Mrs. Mary Beale."

According to the manuscript of Mr. Oldys, Mrs. Beale was also celebrated for her poetry. He styles her, "that masculine poet, as well as Painter, the incomparable Mrs. Beale." Dr. Woodford included in his translations of the Psalms several versions by Mrs. Beale whom he eulogizes as "an absolutely compleat Gentlewoman," and to whom he wrote several poems under the name "Beliza." [1]

Anne Killigrew (1660–1685), a maid of honor to Mary of Modena, died at twenty-five, but she had already attained considerable repute as a portrait painter. There is a tradition that she studied with Sir Peter Lely. If so she must have taken these lessons before she was twenty, for Lely left England in 1680. Dryden says that her portrait of James II expressed "not only his outward part, but drew forth the very image of his heart," and that she was equally successful in depicting the bright beauty and peerless majesty of Mary of Modena. Her portrait of herself was engraved by Becket and prefaces the volume of her poems issued the year after her death. Other paintings were religious in subject, as in her portrayal of incidents in the life of John the Baptist; or mythological, as in her representation of Diana's nymphs. Of far more possible significance is her landscape work. During 1660–1685 Robert Streater is the only English landscape-painter of whom we have record. Charles II brought over a number of Italian and Flemish artists who painted English landscapes in the style of

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. II, pp. 224 ff.

Ruysdael, Poussin, or Salvator Rosa, and their work would be the pictures chiefly known at court. It is not improbable that Miss Killigrew's landscapes were copies or imitations of these foreign artists. Dryden says she painted ruins of Greece and Rome, and forest glades in which were nymphs and shaggy satyrs. Such pictures must have been copies. But Dryden also enumerates sylvan scenes of herds and flocks; clear, shallow little brooks; deep rivers reflecting as in a mirror the trees on their banks. Such pictures are truly English in tone and whatever their intrinsic value such a choice of subjects would put her with Robert Streater at the very inception of English landscape art. And though the scanty records concerning her painting do not substantiate Dryden's description of her landscapes, it could hardly be supposed that he would have been so explicit in a poem written for the family and immediately after her death had there not been some pictures at least moderately correspondent to his lines.[1]

Other seventeenth-century names of less importance show an aspiration in art somewhat above that countenanced by the boarding-schools. Mrs. Pepys and Miss Margaret Pen may serve to indicate the sort of work being done in amateurish fashion in various homes. Both ladies were "learning to limn" with one Mr. Browne. Pepys was tremendously interested in his wife's progress. In the midst of terrifying accounts of the plague and the fire there come in 1665 and 1666 frequent notes on her pictures. Once after a week's absence on exhausting work he records, "To my wife, and having viewed her last piece of drawing since I saw her which is seven or eight days, which pleases me beyond anything in the world, to bed with great content, but weary." The next day, on being importuned to buy her a pearl necklace, he promises it, but only "if she pleases me in her painting." On one occasion he called on Lady Pen and says of the visit, "Talking with Mrs. Pegg Pen, and

[1] At Admiral Killigrew's sale in 1727 were six of his niece's canvases. They were Venus and Adonis, A Satyr playing on a Pipe, Judith and Holofernes, A woman's head, Graces dressing Venus, and her own portrait.

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW

From a painting by herself engraved by T. Chambars

looking at her pictures, and commended them; but, Lord! so far short of my wife's as no comparison." A month later is the note, "I took my Lady Pen home, and her daughter Pegg and, after dinner I made my wife show them her pictures, which did mad Pegg Pen, who learnes of the same man." In September, 1665, Pepys had just seen his wife's picture of our Saviour and thought it so pretty that he boasted of it to Evelyn, at which Evelyn paid him in kind by telling him that "the beautiful Mrs. Middleton is rare (in painting) and his own wife do brave things."[1]

The Evelyn family seems to have been instinctively artistic. In Mr. Thoresby's account of a visit to Evelyn, he said he was shown "many drawings and paintings of his own and his lady's doing; one especially of enamel was surprisingly fine, and this ingenious lady told me how she wrought it." Both Mr. Evelyn and his son Draper were proud of Mary's work in painting. Sixteen years after her death Mr. Thoresby wrote: "He afterwards carried me in his coach to his son Draper's at the Temple, and showed me many curious pieces of his ingenious daughter's performances, both very small in miniature, and as large as the life in oil colours, equal it is thought to the greatest masters of the age. He gave me a specimen of some prospects he took in Italy, and etched upon the copper by his own hand."

At the end of the century is Sarah Curtis (d. 1743) who was married in 1701 to Bishop Hoadly. Before her marriage she had been a pupil of Mary Beale, and she is now represented in the National Portrait Gallery by three canvases, portraits of Burnet, Winston, and Hoadly. Mrs. Rowe's paintings were likewise highly prized by discriminating friends. Of greater interest is Mrs. Delany (1700–1788). She copied at least seventy-two pictures by old masters and painted many portraits. Her work is not represented in public galleries, but many of her pictures are still preserved in private collections. Susan Penelope Gibson was a successful miniature painter.

[1] Pepys, *Diary:* May 7, June 30, July 26 and 29, Aug. 7, 21, 22, Sept. 3, 27, Oct. 10, 1665.

Elizabeth Creed was also an artist of at least local repute. She did sacred subjects as altar-pieces for neighboring churches and she painted numerous portraits. She also gave free lessons to the girls living near her. Her daughter Elizabeth, who inherited her artistic tastes, is said to have ornamented a hall in a Tudor mansion near Oundle.

Short and insignificant as this list appears, it yet assumes real importance when we realize not only that these were the earliest English women to enter this field, but that the list shows up surprisingly well when compared with a similar list of the native English painters among the men of the period. Charles I was a great lover of art and he summoned many artists, some of the first rank, to England, and he bought pictures with a far-sighted munificence, and Charles II was ambitious of following along the same distinguished path. But a list of the pictures painted in England before 1700 shows hardly an English name. Hence the presence of any successful women artists is doubly significant.

The amateurish quality of the painting may be in part explained by the fact that in but one case, that of Mary Beale, was there any impetus or training such as are necessarily associated with work adopted as a profession. The painting was an accomplishment, a pleasant occupation for leisure hours, a resource, rather than a life purpose ardently pursued. The only external reward for the many hours at the easel was the praise of a small circle of friends. The real incentive was an inner demand for some form of self-expression, and the mere number of pictures painted, quite apart from the question of their excellence, is indicative of the eagerness with which women welcomed any sort of opportunity for the free play of their own individuality.

Authors

It was not, however, acting or painting that occupied most of the women whose natures craved something out of the ordinary routine. Writing was a much more natural and feasible

resource. Acting implied a public, and even painting, especially portrait-painting, was likely to be semi-public. But writing could be carried on in retirement and the results submitted only to the partial criticism of a home or social circle. It did not bring women before a carping public or necessarily into competition with men, for even if plays were produced and books published, the name of the writer could be veiled, as it usually was, under a decent anonymity. Hence women who respected the obvious conventions could yet indulge themselves in authorship.

WRITERS ON PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

When women entered upon writing as a career, it might be thought that they would at first take up subjects familiar to them, but such was not the case. For instance, most of the books for children, before the venture of the Newberys about the middle of the eighteenth century, were by men.[1] It was James Janeway whose maxim, "A child is never too little to go to Hell," resulted in works so popular as *A Looking Glass for Children* and *A Token for Children* (1676); John Bunyan's *A Book for Boys and Girls, or Country Rimes for Children; being Divine Poems on the Creed, Commonwealth and Several other Subjects* (1690); Mr. Mason's *A Little Catechism with little Verses and little sayings, for little children* (1693). *The Divine and Moral Songs for Children*, by Isaac Watts in 1720, carried on the religious instruction. There were also various accounts of the "Life and Saintly Death" of children of tender years, which were published with the avowed purpose of influencing other children of like tender years, but none of these are by women. The first women I have come upon who wrote professedly for children are Sarah Fielding and Mrs. Collyer in 1749.[2]

[1] For a list of the books for children published by Newbery and Carnan see the 1768 edition (a fifth edition) of *Goody Two Shoes* (*Notes and Queries*, 4th Series, vol. VIII, p. 510). Cf. Mrs. Field's *The Child and His Book* and Elizabeth Godfrey's *Home Life under the Stuarts*, chap. XIII.

[2] See pp. 233–39.

In a somewhat less degree the same condition exists in relation to medicine, especially in the realms most definitely in the hands of women. Mrs. Pilkington tells us that her father was the first man midwife in England, but nearly all the books on midwifery were written by men. Two women, however, appear in print, in a discussion of their professional work. Mrs. Jane Sharp's book is entitled *The Midwives' Book, or the whole Art of midwifery discovered, directing Child-bearing Women how to behave themselves in their Conception, Breeding, Bearing, and Nursing, of Children. In Six Books. By Mrs. Jane Sharp, Practitioner in the Art of Midwifery above thirty years.*[1]

Mrs. Elizabeth Cellier, a second writer on midwifery, is known perhaps chiefly because she was supposed to have some connection with the Meal Tub Plot. After her acquittal from treason charges she wrote a pamphlet called *Malice Defeated*, in which she courageously expressed her adherence to an unpopular cause in the words, "I do not yet so much fear the smell of Newgate as to be frighted for telling the truth; nor is death so great a terror to me, but that I am still ready to seal the same with my blood." [2] She must have been a woman of substance as well as courage, for she was fined a thousand pounds because of certain passages in this pamphlet. She was also condemned to stand in the pillory three times, a punishment which, according to Lady Russell, she bore with intrepidity and nonchalance, protecting her head from missiles by means of a battledore which she held up with one hand, while with the other she gathered up and put into her pocket all the stones that fell within her reach.

In her profession of midwifery Mrs. Cellier was of high repute, but her interests were not circumscribed by her own practice. One of her schemes was the establishment of a "Colledg of Midwives" where the best possible training should be given. Though her pamphlet, entitled *A Scheme for the Foundation of a Royal Hospital and raising a revenue of 5000 l or 6000 l a*

[1] *Term Catalogues*, Easter, 1671, Easter, 1690.
[2] *Lady Russell's Letters*, vol. I, p. 70 n.

year by and for the Maintenance of a Corporation of Skilful Midwives, did not result in the establishment of her proposed college, the idea and the formulation of the plan do credit to her foresight and intelligence, and sound quite in line with modern forms of woman's civic enterprise.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries could show a long list of interesting and elaborately worked-out books on housewifery in general and cooking in particular, but it seldom happens that one of these books is by a woman. It is, to be sure, not impossible that more of the material was furnished by women than is apparent on the surface. Very many of the books on housekeeping matters were anonymous and were probaby mere publishers' compilations from unacknowledged sources, and in such cases the actual material may have come from various housewives. But during the century I have come upon but three women who published under their own names the results of their experiences as cooks. The earliest of these was Mrs. Hannah Woolley. She was born about 1623. Her mother and elder sisters are said to have been "very well skilled in physick and chirurgery" and they taught her in her youth. She was twice married, the first time to a schoolmaster named Woolley, and then to a Mr. Francis Challinor. She is known usually as Mrs. Woolley. One of her books, *The Queen-like Closet, or A rich Cabinet stored with all manner of rare Receipts for preserving, Candying, and Cookery. Very pleasant and beneficial to all ingenuous persons of the Female Sex*, reached its eleventh edition by 1696. Mrs. Woolley had been governess in two noble families and had acquired definite ideas as to polite behavior. This knowledge also she committed to the printed page. On manners, but especially on household management, she wrote as an authority and received due recognition.

Another book, by a woman whose initials I have not been able to expand into a name, is the following: *The Cook's New Years Gift, Cookery refined, or The Lady, Gentlewoman and Servant-maid's Companion: containing the Art of dressing all sorts of Flesh, Fish, and Fowl, various ways, after the newest Mode; with*

their proper seasonings, sauces, Garnishes, serving up and carving, etc. By Mrs. A. M. a long practiser of this curious Art. (*Term Catalogues*, Mich. 1697. Mich. 1700.)

The work of Mrs. Woolley in the seventeenth century found its most worthy counterpart in the eighteenth century in Hannah Glasse's *The Art of Cookery Made Plain and Easy, which far exceeds any Thing of the kind ever yet Published . . . By a Lady. London. Printed for the Author; and sold at Mrs. Ashburn's, a China-Shop, the Corner of Fleet Ditch, 1747.* The book was issued with about two hundred subscribers. A fourth edition in octavo came out in 1751, a ninth edition in 1759, and many later editions. In her Preface Mrs. Glasse said, "If I have not wrote in the high polite Stile I hope I shall be forgiven, for my Intention is to instruct the lower Sort, therefore treat them in their own Way. For Example: when I bid them lard a Fowl, if I should bid them lard with large Lardoons, they would not know what I want: But when I say they must lard with small Pieces of Bacon, they know what I mean." The new element in her book was this attempt to write out receipts that were simple enough to come into general use.

WRITERS ON RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

The *Term Catalogues* for 1670–1713 show how great was the preponderance during those years of books on "Divinity." That women should share in this prevailing interest is but natural, for religion came within the accepted canon of the truly feminine. And there are evidences of an even greater amount of devotional writing by women than might be expected. The period 1650 to 1750, and especially the first half of that period, could show a long list of women noted for lives of piety and good works.[1] The loose living characteristic of the court appa-

[1] See *Pious Englishwomen of the Seventeenth Century*. Derby, 1845. The list of names given in this book is as follows: Lady Falkland, Lady Carberry, Lady Sunderland, Lady Capel, Mrs. Basire, Lady Mary Wharton, Margaret Lady Maynard, Anne Lady Halkett, Lady Jane Cheyne, Countess of Derby, Countess of Dorset; with notices of Sibylla Egerton, Lady Sophia Chaworth, Isabella Fotherby, Alice Duchess Dudley, Lady Grace Grenville, Mary Perry,

rently had its reaction towards exceptional spiritual rigor on the part of many ladies of rank. And of these devout ladies no small number found in the composition of religious verse or prose the intellectual and emotional outlet denied them in other ways. Almost none of this writing was meant for a public. The reams of meditations, prayers, and reflections left in manuscript were merely a private resource, and often kept secret even from the author's family. Such writings were in their nature fugitive, and it would only now and then happen that some relative or friend would collect and order the papers and see them through the press. We accordingly get scattered hints through funeral sermons and casual notices of an amount of devotional writing greatly in excess of that published. But to tabulate even all the published material would be wearisome and to no good end. A few illustrative examples showing the chief characteristics may suffice.

Lady Elizabeth Brooke (1601-1683)

One of the best examples of the persistent and prodigious industry shown by some of these ladies is the work of Lady Elizabeth Brooke. She began at thirty to make notes on sermons, to copy extracts from commentaries, and occasionally to write out some personal opinions, and she kept at this sedative occupation till her death fifty-two years later. It is painful to reflect on such a mass of undigested material, but the significant fact remains that she preferred such reading and writing to the ordinary interests of her sex. Some of her "Observations and Rules for Practice" were published as an appendix to the sermon preached at her funeral. Selections from her writings were published as late as 1828 in *The Lady's Monitor*.

Anne Murray, Lady Halkett, was even more industrious.

Lady Mary Hastings, Lady Pakington, Lady Digby, Mary Evelyn, Elizabeth Lady Guildford, Lady Newland, Lady Cholmondely, Katharine Lady Neville, Barbara Lady Longueville, Mrs. Susannah Hopton, Anne Baynard, Catharine Bovey, Mrs. Mary Astell, Lady Elizabeth Hastings. (*Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, vol. VII, p. 355.)

Anne Murray, Lady Halkett (1622-1699)

Her father, who was tutor of Charles I and Provost of Eton, died when she was a child, but her mother, who was governess to the Princess Elizabeth, gave her "a complete education." Of her early life she says: "My mother spared no expense in educating all her children in the most suitable way to improve them . . . and paid masters for teaching my sister and mee to write, speak French, play on the lute and virginalls, and dance, and kept a gentlewoman to teach us all kinds of needlework, which shows I was not brought up in an idle life." After several complicated and long drawn-out love affairs — fully described in her *Autobiography* — Anne married Sir James Halkett in 1656. As the years passed her interests finally centered on two subjects, divinity and medicine. In "physick and surgery" she gained great repute. She was consulted in difficult cases from the remotest parts of the kingdom and her fame spread even to Holland. It was quaintly said of her: "She was ever employed either in doing or reaping good: in the summer season she vyed with the bee or ant, in gathering herbs, flowers, worms, snails, etc., for the still or limbeck, for the mortar or boyling pan, etc., and was ordinarily then in a dress fitted for her still-house; making preparations of extracted waters, spirits, ointments, conserves, salves, powders, etc., which she ministered every Wednesday to a multitude of poor infirm persons, besides what she dayly sent abroad to persons of all ranks who consulted her in their maladies." [1] But it was religious themes only that employed her pen. The catalogue of her writings includes twenty-one volumes, or a total of about eight thousand pages of manuscript, some in quarto, some in folio size, and all bound. Some of these books were printed at Edinburgh in 1701. The title of one book of three hundred and fifteen pages will indicate the general character of her writing: *Select Meditations and Prayers upon the First Week, with Observations on each Days Creation, and Considerations on the Seven Capital Vices to be opposed, and their opposite Virtues to be studied and practised.*

[1] Hill, Georgiana: *Women in English Life*, vol. 1, p. 191.

Vices to be subdued		*Virtues to be learned*
Pride	Sunday	*Humility*
Covetousness	Monday	*Contentation*
Lust	Tuesday	*Chastity*
Envy	Wednesday	*Charity*
Gluttony	Thursday	*Temperance*
Anger	Friday	*Patience*
Sloth	Saturday	*Diligence*

All but nine of these books were written during Lady Halkett's twenty-eight years of widowhood when she had much leisure, but under any circumstances the task was a great one, and becomes the more amazing when we reflect upon it as really only a private recreation. To write so much with no urgency of fame or money shows some very strong inner demand for expression and a very facile pen.

"Legacies"

Another type of religious book goes back for its inspiration to Elizabeth Jocelyn's famous *Legacie*. One of Lady Halkett's books was *The Mother's Will to an Unborn Child*, written in 1656 before the birth of her daughter Elizabeth. Books of advice from parents to children to be read after the death of the parents were not uncommon. Elizabeth Sadler (1623–1690), the wife of the Reverend Anthony Walker, was an exceedingly devout woman whose literary instinct and a prevision of death led her to write a large book in octavo for the instruction of her two daughters. Two other books will sufficiently illustrate the type: *The Experiences of God's gracious dealing with Mrs. Elizabeth White, late wife of Mr. Tho. White of Caldecot in the County of Bucks; as they were written under her own hand, and found in her Closet after her decease: she dying in child-bed, December 5th, 1669;* [1] *The Legacie of a Dying Mother to her mourning children; being the Experiences of Mistress Susanna Bell, who died March 13, 1672. With an Epistle Dedicatory by Thomas Brookes, Minister of the Gospel.*

[1] Published Easter, 1671.

Rachel Wriothesley, Lady Russell (1636-1723)

Lady Russell is an example of a woman who definitely set out to be religious, and whose writings contain an analysis of her methods. The circumstances of her life give everything pertaining to her a particular interest. The execution of Lord Russell for treason in 1683 left her broken by the shock. She had, though without avail, set in motion every possible agency to avert his fate, and she had devoted herself absolutely to him till his tragic death. Then, after a period of the deepest despondency, she entered again upon the duties that lay before her. She conducted the education and arranged the marriages of her three children. She showed herself an excellent business woman in the management of her estate. And she steadily interested herself in securing benefices and other offices for persons of whom her husband would have approved. Her *Letters* as published contain a few during the first years of her happy married life; many written concerning the "judicial murder" of Lord Russell; and very many concerning family affairs and the candidates for whom she was seeking favor. As letters they are uninteresting. The subject-matter is generally too local and temporary to hold the attention of the modern reader, and the style is dry and hard. Even the records of her bitter grief and of her struggle to attain a mood of Christian resignation are less affecting than might be expected. A kind of apathy seemed to settle down over her spirit. She was too deeply hurt to find in words any balm for her sorrows. She answered condolences when she must, but briefly, and with no lightening of the gloom that encompassed her. Of all her letters the longest and most valuable as a personal revelation is one written to her children July 21, 1691, "a day of sad remembrances," for it was the anniversary of her husband's execution eight years before. In 1691, Rachel, the oldest child, was twenty years old, and Wriothesley, the youngest, was eleven. The five or six pages in which Lady Russell recounts, probably especially for the benefit of Rachel, her method of personal spiritual watch-care, has great value as a religious document, for she was not alone

in her way of seeking salvation, in her heart-searchings, in her dependence on the external means of grace, in her sedulous striving after perfection. It was the devout habit of devout people of the time, but perhaps carried to a meticulous excess by Lady Russell. She says that she was always provided with a little piece of paper on which she wrote her faults and temptations as they occurred during the day. At night a careful review of this record contributed to a better watch and ward.

And then [she continued], upon Friday morning when I have prayed my usual daily prayers (which have bin most constantly for many years those in taler's holy living) before I pray that of intercession pa: 35. I stop . . . and look upon my dayly notes for that weeke, I recollect my fautes; consider what care I have taken to correct or forsake them — but alas when we do best we shall find enof to be humbled for — therefore I chuse some prayer of confesion most times that in taler's holy living page 302. When I have done it, I make my resolutions to do better for ye time to come, and especialy to watch myselfe where i ame most apt to fal, naming in what I ame so — then I pray some prayer for grace to keep these promises of better obedience — as in pa: 31 — for grace to spend our time wel, on page 271, for the grace of faith, hope & charity. Then I pray the dayly prayer of intercession that I left of at in pa: 35 — after this I praise God . . . for all the blessings vouchsafed to me both spiritual & temporal — as that I was born of Christian parents, not suffered to be strangled in the womb, that I was baptized, and sence, educated in Christian Religion. I blesse thee for al checks of Conscience I have had especially those I have profited by. . . . And then I goe on, I bless thee for our creation, preservation &c. — close with ye lords prayer.

After this service she went over her faults of the week, making a summary of them. A similar abridgment for the month was entered in a book kept for that purpose, the incriminating little pieces of paper were torn up, and a new record entered upon. She found that a frequent re-reading of the book "saved much time in looking back" and contributed to humility. Evidently Lady Russell was as orderly in religion as she was in her business affairs. She finds her definite tabulations "hugely more satisfying to her mind, than a more carelesse loose way of living is, and no settled method." The letter closes with the admoni-

tion, "Be devout & reguler in your dutys to God — heaven wil be secure, and pleasures innocent." [1] Lady Russell's letters reveal a devout, difficult, over-burdened life, so much concerned with the means of grace as never to have any happy consciousness of grace itself.

Elizabeth Blake, Mrs. Burnet (1661-1712)

Elizabeth Burnet (1661–1712), daughter of Sir Richard Blake, married at seventeen into a Catholic family. Her husband, Robert Berkeley, was a ward of Bishop Fell, through whom the marriage was brought about. The firmness and tact necessary to maintain her own views as a Protestant and hold her husband to that faith, and yet not antagonize the family, could hardly be expected of so young a girl. But Bishop Fell had judged her character well and she met all the demands of so delicate a situation. She took advantage of many leisure hours in the country to investigate fully the questions at issue between the Catholics and the Protestants. She did not know the learned tongues, but she studied the Scriptures, read commentaries, and conversed with clergymen. When she became a widow in 1693, at thirty-two, she employed her time in two characteristic ways. In the administration of her husband's charitable schemes she found congenial activity. And she gave way to her natural instinct for writing. In 1700 she became the wife of Bishop Burnet. His approval of her literary work and his request that it be published led to the production of her *Method of Devotion*. It was so popular that she revised and enlarged it and brought out a second edition. And it was republished in 1713 after her death. The book contained "Rules for holy and devout Living," "Prayers on Several Occasions," "Advices and Devotions on the Holy Sacrament." Mrs. Trotter said of her in 1701, "She has an extraordinary clear and solid judgment, the truest goodness and prudence, and the most charming affability in her behaviour; in short, I have met with no such perfection in any of my sex."

[1] Lady Russell's Letters, vol. II, pp. 72–85.

Elizabeth Bury was another young woman whose bright, acquisitive mind resented conventional inactivity and put out tentacles in all directions for knowledge. Philology, philosophy, history, heraldry, geography, mathematics, were among her interests. She contended that souls were of no sex and that women were often "disposed to an accurate search into things curious and profitable, as well as others." She studied anatomy and medicine until she had gained "a surprizing knowledge of the human body, and of the *Materia Medica*," so that she could state the symptoms of the most difficult and intricate cases in the physician's own terms. She learned French that she might talk with French refugees to whom she was a benefactress. Her correspondence and conversation were both highly prized. But all these interests must be counted merely as diversions. "Her constant favourite and darling study was divinity." The Bible, Mr. Henry's *Annotations*, a few works on practical divinity, and a competent number of Hebrew books made up her working library. Hebrew because of its scriptural importance was the subject on which she concentrated her attention and she was reputed to have a critical knowledge of its idioms and peculiarities. It was said that she could even quote the original in common conversation if the elucidation of some text were in question. As the years passed, books and writing, "morning hours with God," and many arduous charitable duties so fully occupied her that she found mere social life an unrewarded tax. Of ordinary conversation she said that though one might strike fire "it always fell on wet tinder." The mass of manuscripts found after her death reflected the variety of her interests, but the majority were on topics such as *Meditations on the Divinity of the Holy Scriptures*, *The unreasonableness of Fretting against God*, and similar subjects. She kept also a voluminous *Diary*, an abridgment of which was published by her husband in Bristol in 1721. Mr. Watts's *Elegy* indicates something of the reverence with which Mrs. Bury was regarded by her contemporaries; and a woman of her personal charm, executive

Elizabeth Bury (1644-1720)

ability, alert responsiveness to the calls of charity, along with her quick mind, and multifarious, if not always profound, learning would take an even higher place in any organized community to-day.

Women also entered the less feminine fields of controversy.

Susanna Hopton (1627-1709)

Susanna Hopton is an interesting example. In her youth she had become a Catholic, but under the influence of her husband she entered upon a thorough study of the points at issue between the Catholics and the Protestants. Dr. Hickes says of her: "She made herself as perfect in the controversie, as English writers could make her, who managed the controversie on both sides. I have (says he) above twenty popish authors, which she left me, and some of them with marginal notes in her own hand. She was well versed in Bishop Moreton's, Archbishop Laud's and Mr. Chillingworth's works, and Ranchin's *Review of the Council of Trent*, etc." [1] As a result of this reading she drew up a long and learned letter to Father Tuberville, showing him why she had renounced the Church of Rome. This letter was published by Dr. Hickes immediately after her death in his volume of *Controversial Letters* in 1710. Mr. William said that she was an excellent casuist and divine, and could encounter and confute all enemies of the church. "Her discourse and stile upon serious matters was strong, eloquent and nervous; upon pleasant subjects, witty and facetious: and when it required an edge was sharp as a razor." *Daily Devotions*, *Meditations on the Six Days Of Creation*, and *Meditations on the Life of Christ* were her other works. As a wife, a neighbor, and a friend she seems to have been in high esteem, but her life had the church as its center.

Damaris Cudworth and Mary Astell, two of the most gifted women of the period, became involved in the theological discussion between John Norris and John Locke. Miss Cudworth knew both dis-

Damaris Cudworth, Lady Masham (1658-1708)

[1] Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 390.

putants well. As a young woman she had corresponded with Norris on the subject of "Platonic Love," and in 1689 he had dedicated to her his *Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, with reference to the study of learning and knowledge.* But it was Locke who had a permanent influence on her opinions. While she was still in Cambridge with her father, Ralph Cudworth, Locke taught her divinity and philosophy. After her marriage to Sir Francis Masham in 1685, Locke was a frequent visitor at their home, and from 1691 till his death in 1704 he lived permanently with them. Her polemical articles were doubtless written under his inspiration. In 1694 the correspondence between Mary Astell and John Norris was published, under the title, *Letters concerning the Love of God.* Two years later Lady Masham answered their arguments in her *Discourse concerning the Love of God,*[1] which was attributed to Locke and answered by Norris. In 1700 Lady Masham published *Occasional Thoughts in reference to a virtuous Christian Life,* which is her closing word in the controversy.

Damaris Cudworth was a woman of remarkable intellect. Her father was delighted with the early manifestations of her power and he took pride in securing for her the best possible education. The curious epitaph on her tomb praises her learning, judgment, candor, penetration, and love of truth, and credits her with being a devoted and intelligent mother. It sums up her character in the statement, that "to the Softness and Elegancy of her own Sex" she added "several of the noblest Accomplishments and Qualities of the other," and that "she possessed these advantages in a degree unusual to either." The conventional eulogy on a tomb is always open to suspicion, but in this case the vague generalities of the epitaph fall below the truth. Locke, in a letter to Phillipp van Limborch, said of her: "The Lady herself is so well versed in theological and philosophical studies and of such an original mind that you will not find many men to whom she is not superior in wealth of knowledge and ability to profit by it. Her judgment is excellent, and

[1] Florence Smith: *Mary Astell,* p. 109.

I know few who can bring such clearness of thought to bear upon the most abstruse subjects, or such capacity for searching through and solving the difficulties. I do not say of most women, but even of most learned men."[1]

Lady Masham was also recognized as one of the early champions for woman's education, for when Mary Astell's *Serious Proposal* appeared anonymously in 1694 it was by some attributed to Lady Masham. She took the subject up definitely in her *Occasional Thoughts.* After commenting on the lack of knowledge of science, law, history, politics, morals, and religion, of most English gentlemen, Lady Masham continued:

> Thus wretchedly destitute of all that Knowledge which they ought to have, are, generally speaking, our English gentlemen, and being so, what wonder can it be, if they like not that women should have knowledge; for this is a quality that will give some sort of superiority even to those who care not to have it? . . . But such men as these would assuredly find their account much better therein, if tenderness of that prerogative would teach them a more legitimate way of maintaining it, than such a one as is a very great impediment or discouragement at the least, to others in the doing what God requires of them. For it is an undesirable truth that a lady who is able to give an account of her faith, and to defend her religion against the attacks of the cavilling wits of the age, or the abuses of the obtruders of vain opinions: that is capable of instructing her children in the reasonableness of the christian religion, and of laying in them the foundations of a solid virtue: that a lady, I say, no more knowing than this does demand, can hardly escape being called learned by the men of our days, and in consequence thereof, becoming a subject of ridicule to one part of them, and of aversion to the other; with but a few exceptions of some virtuous and rational persons. And is not the incurring of general dislike one of the strongest discouragements we can have to any thing? [2]

Grace Norton, Lady Gethin (1676-1696)

There was published soon after Lady Gethin's death, from loose papers left by her, a work entitled *Reliquiæ Gethinianæ.* Congreve's poem, entitled *Verses to the Memory of Lady Grace Gethin,*

[1] Bourne, H.: *Life of Locke,* vol. II, p. 213.

[2] *Occasional Thoughts,* p. 169. See *The Lady's Magazine,* 1774, for an article on Lady Masham.

occasioned by reading her Book, speaks in high praise of her. He says the book shows all that study or time could teach.

> But to what height must his amazement rise,
> When, having read the work, he turns his eyes
> Again to view the foremost opening page,
> And there the beauty, sex, and tender age,
> Of her beholds, in whose pure mind arose
> Th' ethereal source, from whence the current flows.

Lady Gethin was counted a marvel of wisdom, but when we read her *Apothegms* and *Essays* and *Witty Sayings* we are more impressed by her accurate memory of Bacon and other earlier essayists than by any profound knowledge of life on her own part.

Mrs. Eleanor James (fl. 1685-1715)

Mrs. Eleanor James [1] was a writer on religious and political topics. No complete list of her works has ever been compiled. She gained publicity for her religious views by numerous single printed sheets between 1685 and 1715. John Dunton described her husband as being well known because he was an excellent printer, and "something the better known for being the husband of that she-state-politician, Mrs. Eleanor James." She is said to have constituted herself a sort of "adviser to reigning sovereigns" from Charles II to George I, whom she visited in turn for counsel and admonition. Her chief published works are on religious controversy. Her *Vindication of the Church of England* (1687) created considerable antagonism. In answer to a satirical *Address of thanks to Mrs. James on behalf of the Church of England* she wrote *Mrs. James's Defence.* A lady also appeared in the lists against her in a book entitled *Elizabeth Rowe's Short Answer to Eleanor James's Long Preamble or Vindication of the new Test.* Mrs. James's *Apology* (1694) and her *Reasons humbly presented to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal* (1715) complete the list of her more important publications.

[1] Dunton: *Life and Errors*, p. 334; Nichols: *Anecdotes of Bowyer*, p. 609; *Ibid.: Literary Anecdotes*, vol. I, p. 305; Dryden: *Works* (ed. by Scott), vol. X, p. 110.

Mrs. Newcome's *Enquiry into the Evidences of the Christian Religion* was published in 1728. Mr. Bowyer says that she was by every one accounted a most excellent and worthy woman, and that her learning was attested by more than one volume. Mr. Grey mentioned her in his *Hudibras* as "the very learned lady" who gave him the note about Penguins in Book I. Nichols quotes a Mr. "T. F." who says that she had great fame for learning, but adds cautiously: "All that I know of that matter is, that as often as I have been in company with her, and when things were thrown out designedly to tempt her to speak, and discover herself, as the armour produced to Achilles, it never took effect. So that I can not speak of her learning from my own knowledge; but if she was not that, she was something better, a very good woman." [1]

Mrs. Newcome (fl. 1728)

The most distinguished woman in the field of polemics in the first half of the eighteenth century was Catherine Trotter, better known as Mrs. Cockburn. The contemporary recognition accorded Mrs. Cockburn is to-day the most surprising fact about her. Her father was a Scotchman, a commander in the royal navy, and highly thought of by Charles II, but his death at sea in 1683, and many ensuing disastrous business complications, left the family in serious financial difficulties. Mrs. Trotter was, however, nearly related to the Duke of Lauderdale and the Earl of Perth, a fact which secured her social recognition no matter how narrow her circumstances. Catherine, her youngest child, began writing poetry at a very early age. She also early showed unusual mental alertness, for "she both learned to write and made herself mistress of the *French* language, by her own application and diligence, without any instructor." In Latin and Logic she had some guidance. Logic was so interesting to her that while still young she drew up an abstract of its principles, for her own use.

Catherine Trotter, Mrs. Cockburn (1679-1749)

[1] Nichols: *Anecdotes of Bowyer*, p. 612.

Catherine's first extant poem was a thanksgiving in heroic verse for the recovery of Mr. Bevil Higgons from small-pox. She was then fourteen, but the labored lines have a kind of heavy maturity prophetic of her later verse. In her seventeenth year she entered fully upon her literary career. For thirteen years she devoted herself to study and writing, and if applause from high authorities could justify her serious preoccupation with things of the mind, such justification was hers in full measure. Before she was seventeen her tragedy, *Agnes de Castro*, was acted at Drury Lane. It was by the advice of the Earl of Dorset and Middlesex that she had allowed "this little off-spring of her early muse" [1] to try its fortune in the world, and such success as it had must be attributed largely to the protection of influential patrons. But with or without patrons, whatever Miss Trotter did was sure to win praise. When she wrote a eulogistic poem to Congreve on his *Mourning Bride*, in 1697, he expressed himself as heartily vexed that her lines came too late for publication with his play, and said of her poetical commendation, "It is the first thing, that ever happened to me, upon which I should make it my choice to be vain."

In 1698 there appeared, at the new theater in Lincoln's Inn Fields, Miss Trotter's second tragedy entitled *The Fatal Friendship*. Mr. Betterton, Mr. Verbruggen, Mr. Thurmond, Mrs. Barry, and Mrs. Bracegirdle, took the chief parts. The play ran several nights and was seen occasionally on the stage until far down in the eighteenth century. Its immediate success was great and the praise that poured in upon the nineteen-year-old author must have been bewilderingly sweet. Mr. Higgons evened up the score for the small-pox poem by some verses which declared her direct descent from Sappho. Mr. Harman said that she maintained the true empire of the stage along with Congreve, Granville, and a few others "well read in honour's school." From "an unknown hand" came a poem addressed to "my much esteemed Friend." This author writes

[1] Cockburn: *Works*, vol. I, p. vi.

of his consuming anxiety at the beginning of the play, and of the joy that gushed forth as he observed its success. The impression from his poem is that he had known the play intimately before its appearance. According to "the elegant pen of Mr. John Hughes" Miss Trotter's "virgin voice offends no virgin ear," her chaste thoughts and clean expressions set her nobly apart as a reformer of the stage, and she is a successful champion of her sex, since her genius has destroyed the "Salique law of wit" established by men. So pleased was Mr. Farquhar with *The Fatal Friendship* that he sent his first comedy *Love and a Bottle*, which had "been scandalously aspersed for affronting the ladies," "to stand its tryal before one of the fairest of the sex, and the best judge." And he adds his thanks for the "favour and honour" she showed him by appearing on his third night. He concludes his letter with a double compliment: "But humbly to confess the greatest motive, my passions were wrought so high by representation of *Fatal Friendship*, and since raised so high by a sight of the beautiful author, that I gladly catched this opportunity of owning myself your most faithful and humble servant." Mrs. Manly also gave a generous tribute to her young fellow-aspirant for stage honors:

> Orinda and the Fair Astrea gone
> Not one was found to fill the Vacant Throne;
> Aspiring Man had quite regain'd the Sway,
> Again had Taught us humbly to Obey;
> Till you (Nature's third start, in favour of our Kind)
> With stronger Arms, their Empire have disjoyn'd, etc.
>
> *Dela Manley*

After *The Fatal Friendship* Miss Trotter's work for the stage need not be particularly dwelt upon. She had a comedy brought out at Drury Lane in 1701. A new tragedy in the same year at Drury Lane, and a tragedy at the Haymarket in 1706, complete the list. Some occasional poems appeared during this period. In 1700 she was one of the nine ladies who wrote on the death of Dryden, under the title *The Nine Muses; or Poems written by as many ladies on the death of the late famous*

John Dryden, Esq. In 1704 she entered the lists with Mr. Addison and Mr. John Philips in celebrating the victory of Blenheim, but she did not venture to publish her poem till the manuscript had been submitted to the Duke of Marlborough. When the duke and the duchess and the lord treasurer Godolphin declared themselves "greatly pleased" she sent her lines to the press.

Besides her dramatic and poetical work Miss Trotter wrote in prose on critical and theological subjects. An interesting disquisition on "the poets of the last age" appeared in the dedication of her *The Unhappy Penitent* in 1701. Of Shakespeare, Dryden, Lee, and Otway she speaks with independent judgment and considerable discrimination. But none of the works so far listed are those on which her fame rested. It was not in poetry, drama, or literary criticism that she found satisfaction. Religion and philosophy were her true field. Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding* was published in 1690, and among the antagonistic criticisms it called forth were three series of *Remarks* published anonymously in 1697 and 1699. Young as she was Miss Trotter pursued the controversy with the keenest interest and in 1701 she drew up a *Defence of The Essay of Human Understanding.* Mr. George Burnet of Kemney, then in Holland, and Mrs. Burnet, the wife of Bishop Burnet, were entrusted with the secret of her *Defence*, and both advised anonymous publication, agreeing with her that her youth and sex would, if known, count against a work of that nature. Her *Defence* appeared in print in 1702. Mrs. Burnet on finding that the Bishop, Mr. John Norris, and Mr. Locke himself, were highly pleased with it, could keep the secret no longer.[1] Mr. Locke sent Miss Trotter a present of books and a letter in which he expressed his gratitude for "an opportunity to own you for my protectress, which is the greatest honour my Essay could have procured me. Give me leave therefore to assure you, that as the rest of the world take notice of the

[1] Mrs. Cockburn: *Works:* Letters to G. Burnet, Dec. 9, 1701; Feb. 2, 1703–04, vol. II, pp. 153, 166. Also Letter from Mrs. Burnet, vol. I, p. xvii.

strength and clearness of your reasoning, so I can not but be extremely sensible, that it was employed in my behalf." [1]

A second pamphlet was entitled *A discourse concerning a guide in Controversies* and grew out of her own spiritual conflicts. Although of a Protestant family she had become a Catholic early in life, but had gradually found herself less and less in harmony with that church till 1707 when, in this *Discourse*, she announced her return to the Church of England.

The polemical years between 1701 and 1707 had been diversified by several love affairs. Mr. George Burnet of Kemney, Mr. Fenn who was an eloquent young clergyman,[2] Mr. Cockburn, "and some others," are indicated in her letters. Miss Trotter's letters to two of these lovers, Mr. Fenn and Mr. Burnet, are nearly as polemical as her *Defence* and *Discourse*. She uses all her old Art of Logic to reason her lovers into friends. She had, in fact, no particular respect for the passion of love as a factor in human life. She apologized for having given it so important a place in her plays, for it was "not noble enough to fill a whole tragedy." [3] When Mr. Burnet professed "the most passionate ardour of mind and soul" for her,[4] she responded with a eulogy of "just and beneficent friendship." "It is only that niggard passion, which is distinguish'd by the name of love, that excludes all but one object from having a part in it, and is not satisfied without monopolizing the affections of the heart." [5] She offered Mr. Burnet "due gratitude" and she surely owed him some return for the pains he took to spread the fame of her works. He wrote so highly of her to the Princess Sophia that the royal lady wrote in answer: "*Je suis charmée du portrait avantageux, que vous me faites de la nouvelle Sappho Ecossoise, qui semble meriter les eloges, que vous luy donnez.*" [6]

Miss Trotter's letters to Mr. Cockburn, whom she married in 1708, are also full of argument and business. If she had a

[1] Mrs. Cockburn: *Works*, vol. I, p. xx.

[2] *Ibid.* See Letters to Mr. Cockburn, June 23 to Sept. 21, 1707; Letters to Mr. Fenn, July 18 to Oct. 31, 1707.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. xii.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 171.

[5] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 174.

[6] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. xxv.

deep affection for him she certainly never allowed herself to speak out. She says that their chief aim in marriage was to assist each other in performing those duties that flow from the love of God.[1] Of the ensuing twenty years she wrote in 1738 as follows: "Being married in 1708, I bid adieu to the muses, and so wholly gave myself up to the cares of a family, and the education of my children, that I scarce knew there was any such thing as books, plays, or poems stirring in Great Britain." [2] It was an attack on Mr. Locke that again drew her into public controversy. Dr. Winch Holdsworth published in 1720 a sermon on Mr. Locke's "false reasonings" against the resurrection of the same body. The sermon came to her hands some years later and she published in 1726–27 *A Letter to Dr. Holdsworth.* In 1727 he published *A Defence of the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the same Body.* Her answer, *A Vindication of Mr. Locke's Christian Principles*, remained in manuscript till the publication of her works in 1751. She also wrote in 1739 *Remarks upon some Writers in the Controversy concerning the Foundation of Moral Duty and Moral Obligation* which was published in 1743 in *The History of the Works of the Learned.* In 1747 she entered upon a confutation of Dr. Rutherforth's *Essay on the Nature and Obligations of Virtue.* Her *Remarks* on this *Essay* was published by Mr. Warburton with a laudatory Preface in which he spoke of her "fine genius," "clearness of expression, strength of reason, precision of logic, and attachment to truth."

From 1731 to 1748 there is a series of letters between Mrs. Cockburn and Anne Hepburn (afterwards Mrs. Arbuthnot), her niece. It is almost entirely a literary and religious correspondence and shows that Miss Hepburn's interests were on almost as high a plane as her aunt's. A list of the books they exchanged and commented on would include most of the important new works in England during the first half of the century. The most interesting literary taste revealed is Mrs. Cockburn's partiality for Pope. In 1738 she wrote him a long letter in which she said, "Your *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, and

[1] Mrs. Cockburn: *Works*, vol. II, p. 206. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. xi.

Essay on Man, gave me some idea of your morals. But when I read your private letters, where, as you express it, you *throw yourself out upon paper*, I thought I saw your heart open and undisguised. I was charmed with the sincere, ingenuous, unsuspecting friend, the unwilling enemy, the benevolent mind, extending to all parties, all religions, all mankind; the filial piety, the tender concern for a mother's approaching death, at an age, when most men would have considered theirs only as a useless burden. In short, I saw so many amiable qualities opening on every different occasion, that I began as much to admire the valuable man as the great genius." She chides him gently for thinking too lightly of his genius, for while he is measuring syllables and coupling rhymes to such excellent moral ends, she is ready to assure him of a final "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*" It is a pity this epistle was never sent. It would doubtless have been almost as surprising to the wicked wasp of Twickenham as to the crowd of enemies for whose benefit he was preparing the *New Dunciad.*

Mr. Birch, who edited Mrs. Cockburn's *Works* in 1751, said of her:

> Posterity at least will be solicitious to know, to whom they will owe the most demonstrative and perspicuous reasonings, upon subjects of eternal importance; and her own sex is entitled to the fullest information about one, who has done such honour to them, and raised our ideas of their intellectual power, by an example of the greatest extent of understanding and correctness of judgment. Antiquity, indeed, boasted of its *female philosophers*, whose merits have been drawn forth in an elaborate treatise of *Menage*. [*Historia Mulierum Philosophorum*, 8vo. Lyons, 1690.] But our own age and country may without injustice or vanity oppose to those illustrious ladies the defender of *Locke* and *Clarke;* who, with a genius equal to the most eminent of them, had the superior advantage of cultivating it in the only effectual method of improvement, the study of a real philosophy, and a theology worthy human nature, and its all perfect author.

Mrs. Cockburn had a strong, clear, acute mind. The impression she made on the best thinkers in her generation is due to this fact, and, further, to the fact that she used her mental-

ity on topics then counted vital. She was didactic, she was morally irreproachable, she was unassuming. That her editor's confident prediction of her fame has been discredited by time, that she is in reality hardly so much as a name to-day, is due partly to the oblivion that has overtaken her subjects, but also, and even more justly, to the dead level of her excellence. She has no wit, no fancy, no imagination, no sprightliness of thought, no humor. Mary Astell and "Sophia" were occasionally roused to picturesque indignation. But not so with Mrs. Cockburn. She is as cold, as orderly, as unstimulating as a formula.

Among dissenters there is less literary record. We find more among the Quakers than elsewhere, yet even there not so much as might be expected from the fact of their recognition of the equality of the sexes. It was stated in their creed: "As we dare not encourage any ministry but that which we believe to spring from the influence of the Holy Spirit, so neither dare we attempt to restrain this ministry to persons of any condition in life, or to the male sex alone; but as male and female are one in Christ, we hold it proper that such of the female sex as we believe to be endued with a right qualification for the ministry should exercise their gifts for the general edification of the Church." [1] As a rule, however, the Quaker women were too busy on their preaching tours to have much time for authorship. Margaret Fell is their chief representative writer.[2] Her activities began before the Restoration. As the wife of Judge Fell of Swarthmore Hall she was of distinct social importance, and she showed unusual ability in the conduct of the household affairs incident on her husband's wealth and large landed properties. She was always exceedingly devout and Swarthmore Hall was traditionally recognized as the home of "lecturing ministers." Among these itinerant speakers, in 1652, was George Fox. His brief sojourn at Swarth-

Mrs. Margaret Fell (1614-1702)

[1] Hill, Georgiana: *Women in English Life*, vol. I, p. 248.
[2] Webb, Maria: *The Fells of Swarthmoor Hall.*

more was epoch-making, for when Judge Fell returned from a distant visit he was met as he crossed Ulverston Sands by a solemn conclave of gentlemen on horseback whose purpose it was to announce that his wife and most of his household had become Quakers. On investigation he became himself at least sufficiently sympathetic with the new views not to interfere with his wife's convictions. For half a century she was identified with Quaker interests. The great dining-room at Swarthmore was for many years the regular meeting-place of the Friends. In 1669, eleven years after the death of Judge Fell, Margaret married George Fox, and till his death in 1691 she gave her time, her thought, her money, to a defense of persecuted Quakers. Three of her daughters became preachers. She traveled from jail to jail, from house to house, to comfort the imprisoned and their families, and from meeting to meeting to preach the word. As the "nursing mother" of the church she had an immense correspondence. The petitions to the king and to powerful noblemen were often composed and personally presented by her. The importance attached to her advice and opinions is indicated by the hundreds of letters still extant addressed to her by the preachers who gathered about George Fox. During her most active years the practical conduct of church affairs occupied her to the exclusion of other work. But earlier, especially during 1665–1668, she made use of the enforced leisure consequent on various imprisonments to write in defense of Quaker principles. Of the ten tracts thus produced one of the most interesting was on the vexed question of the right of women to preach and was entitled *Women's Speaking Justified Proved and Allowed of by the Scriptures.*

Anne Finch, Lady Conway (d. 1679)

Another important lady who, after long study in other religions came finally into the Quaker faith, was Anne Finch, a daughter of Sir Henry Finch. In 1651 she married Lord Conway and was established as mistress of Ragley Castle in Warwickshire. As a young woman she had been attracted by the teachings of

Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist. After she became Lady Conway he spent much time at Ragley where he wrote several of his books. During his various absences Mr. More and Lady Conway corresponded regularly on theological subjects. The questions in her letters sufficiently indicate the metaphysical perplexities that absorbed her thoughts. She knew the learned tongues and read eagerly the works of "Plato, Plotinus, Philo Judæus, and the Kabbala Denudata." She was a theosophist and a mystic. The esoteric, the mysterious, the miraculous, captured her imagination. "Under her inspiration Ragley became the home of religious marvels." One chapter of *John Inglesant*, the novel in which Mr. Shorthouse so sympathetically described Little Gidding, is said to be based on the life at Ragley. Lady Conway suffered from headaches so severe and persistent as to defy the best skill of London and Paris. Under the influence of Mr. More, who said there might be "a sanative and healing contagion as well as a morbid and venemous," she summoned to Ragley the famous Valentine Greatrakes, "the Stroker," but the magic of his hands failed in her case. Her headaches made of her life one long disease, but never conquered her intellectual eagerness and hardly abated her learned pursuits.

When she finally joined the Quakers it was against the advice of Mr. More, but she was one, he said, "who never submitted all her judgment to any one." Her friendship with Robert Barclay and William Penn followed her acceptance of the new doctrines. While Lady Conway was undoubtedly one of the most distinguished converts to the Quaker faith, her invalidism and then her death in 1679 interfered with any such active service as that of Margaret Fell. The two women were, moreover, temperamentally unlike. Margaret Fell, a descendant of Anne Askew, had the blood of the martyrs in her veins. A "cause" could capture her mind and heart. She was energetic, an organizer and administrator. Lady Conway, on the other hand, beyond almost any woman of her time, lived in things of the mind.

Of Lady Conway's numerous works only one has been printed. In 1690 there appeared at Amsterdam a collection of philosophical treatises written in Latin. The first one of the series was a translation of "a work by a certain English countess, learned beyond her sex." Leibnitz, on the authority of Van Helmont, attributed this to Lady Conway. This treatise was re-translated into English in 1692.[1]

Jane Ward, Mrs. Lead (1623-1704)

Mrs. Jane Lead[2] was a mystic and the founder of a sect. She was the daughter of Schildknap Ward, of a good Norfolk family, and it is said that there were no external influences to account for her unusual experiences. As a child in the midst of the Christmas gayeties at her father's house, she heard a miraculous voice that summoned her to a religious life. She became a widow while still young and thereafter followed without hindrance, in the completest seclusion, in London, her recognized vocation. She studied mystical works and had nightly prophetic visions which she recorded in her spiritual diary. Between 1681 and 1702 she published fifteen volumes and another one appeared immediately after her death. In 1693 Mr. Francis Lee, a young Oxford man and a medical student at Leyden, visited her, gave allegiance to her doctrines, and devoted himself to her service. Mr. Lee and Mrs. Lead became the center of an important theosophical organization called *The Philadelphian Society*, which existed till 1702. Mrs. Lead died in 1704 "in the 81st year of her age and the 65th of her vocation to the inward life." Mr. Lee wrote to the Countess Kniphausen and others in France and Germany a letter entitled *The Last Hours of Jane Lead by an Eye and Ear Witness.* Five years before her death Mrs. Lead's spiritual diary was published under the title, *A Fountain of Gardens, watered by the Rivers of Divine*

[1] Ward's *Life of Henry More* (1710). *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11th ed., under "More, Henry"; *Dictionary of National Biography*, under "Lady Conway"; Webb, Mrs. Maria: *The Penns and Penningtons of the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 297, 313.

[2] *British Quarterly Review*, July, 1873, pp. 181–87.

pleasure, and springing up in all the variety of spiritual plants, blown up by the pure Breath into Paradise. To which is prefixed, A Poem, introductory to the Philadelphia Age, called Solomon's Porch, or The Beautiful gate to Wisdom's Temple.

Susannah Annesley, Mrs. Wesley (1670-1742)

One of the most notable women of the early eighteenth century was Susannah Wesley, the mother of John and Charles Wesley. She came of a fine old Nottinghamshire family, and her father, Dr. Annesley, a man of power and influence, "the St. Paul of the Nonconformists," secured for his children an education suitable to their birth. At twenty-one Susannah, a beautiful and gifted young woman, married Samuel Wesley and entered upon her career as wife of a rector of humble position and small means.

It is said that large families either submerge the individual, or result in characters of exceptionally fine discipline. From this test Susannah emerged triumphant. She was the twenty-fifth child of her father, and in the first twenty-one years of her married life she had nineteen children. So, as child and parent, she was always in close touch with many varied personalities, an experience the conditions of which demanded both firmness and flexibility.

Her married life seemed made up of difficulties. Most of it was passed in a remote rectory, at Epworth, in the Lincolnshire fens, among the crudest and most boorish people.[1] Not even the strictest economy could hold the outgo within the meager limits of the rector's stipend. There were fevers, small-pox, and other diseases to combat, and five of the children died young. There were also disasters through fire and flood and through the hostility of malicious parishioners, but Mrs. Wesley held herself steadfast to her ideals. Her spirit was never daunted. In the most unpromising environment, under the most adverse conditions, she created a family life remarkable for its order, serenity, good breeding, and aspira-

[1] Winchester: *Life of Wesley*, p. 1. Telford: *Life of Wesley*, p. 52.

tion. Even as a child the quality of her mind and character had been apparent. It is reported that at thirteen, having heard at home much discussion of the points at issue between the Nonconformists and the Church of England, she had reviewed the questions for herself and had decided in favor of the Church. Throughout her married life she showed the same independence and self-reliance. Mr. and Mrs. Wesley were always very happy together, but she was in no sense the ideal submissive wife of the eighteenth century. She wrote to her son John when he was in Oxford, "'T is a misfortune almost peculiar to our family that your father and I seldom think alike."[1] She considered King William a usurper and consistently refused to say Amen to the rector's prayers for the new monarch. Mr. Wesley celebrated the victory of Blenheim in a poem, but Mrs. Wesley disapproved of the war and she wrote: "Since I am not satisfied of the lawfulness of the war, I cannot beg a blessing on our arms till I can have the opinion of one wiser and a more competent judge than myself in this point; namely, whether a private person that had no hand in the beginning of the war but did always disapprove of it may, notwithstanding, implore God's blessing on it, and pray for the good success of those arms which were taken up, I think unlawfully." And she declined to join in the worship on the day appointed for prayers for the success of English troops.[2]

Mrs. Wesley had a natural genius for teaching and she became the school-mistress of her family. Her methods were uniform and rigorous. At five each child was given in one day, during two sessions of three hours each, such effective tutoring in the alphabet that by night he knew it and could begin reading the Book of Genesis the next day. The various studies counted necessary followed in due order. Each child was kept closely to the task in hand and the progress made was surprising. Mrs. Wesley said, "It is almost incredible what a child may be taught in a quarter of a year by a vigorous application if it have but tolerable capacity and good health." The

[1] Winchester, *Life of Wesley*, p. 9. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

virtues inculcated were prompt obedience, quiet manners, correct speech, and courtesy. The religious training of the children received especial emphasis. Mrs. Wesley wrote out for them a clear series of explanatory comments on the Catechism and the Creed, she trained them to take part in family devotions, and once a week she met each child for an hour of private religious conversation and instruction. So precious were these hours to the children that when John was a Fellow in Oxford, he wrote urging his mother to devote her thought and prayer to him during the Thursday evening hour that had been his.

Mrs. Wesley's devout ministrations to her own family, during her husband's absence, became known to some of the neighbors who desired to join her circle. The numbers increased so rapidly that on the first Sunday of February, 1712, more than two hundred were present and many went away for want of room. The curate objected to these meetings and Mr. Wesley wrote in deprecation of them. Mrs. Wesley, too, was seriously in doubt whether one of her sex could find Scripture authority for thus breaking the bread of life to the people. But the manifest needs of the poor parishioners and their eagerness for the gospel prevailed over all doubts and the meetings continued.

The power of Mrs. Wesley in her own home and immediate neighborhood was, through her son John, felt throughout England. Mr. Winchester says truly:

> John Wesley was the son of his mother. From her he inherited his logical cast of mind, his executive capacity, his inflexibility of will, his union of independence of judgment with respect for authority, his deep religious temper. And all the characteristics were developed and fixed by his early training. His precision and order, his gift of organization and mastery of details, his notions of education, even some specific rules and customs of his religious societies, can be traced to his mother's discipline. It is often said that Methodism began in the University of Oxford: with more truth it might be said that it began in Susannah Wesley's nursery.[1]

[1] *Life of Wesley*, pp. 10–11.

The religious writers so far mentioned only partially represent the great amount of similar literary activity. In many homes where rank or wealth made social diversions an alluring possibility there was carried on by wives and daughters not only a life of austere piety and great practical benevolence, but a life also of intellectual ambitions and instincts. The fact that many of the questions which these ladies discussed are now dead issues cannot obscure the more significant fact that on questions then counted vital they wrote always with energy, often with logical acumen, and sometimes with effectiveness. The home and social life that emerges from scattered hints and records in these religious writings is as remote from that portrayed in contemporary court memoirs or diaries as is the general tone of *Paradise Lost* or *Pilgrim's Progress*, and is worth dwelling upon as illustrative of that body of almost unrecognized solid morality that gave to Jeremy Collier a background of public approval when he attacked the immorality of the stage, and through the stage, the immorality of the stage-going people.

WRITERS ON PRACTICAL BENEFICENCE

The piety that finds genuine expression in the writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had almost as frequent expression in the practical necessities of daily life. On the great ladies of the land was laid the responsibility for the physical well-being, the education, and the happiness of those beneath them in birth and wealth. Responsibilities now provided for by multifarious overworked organizations then devolved upon individuals. And many women in the distribution of their money and leisure showed so much insight and practical ability as to become ruling influences in their communities. The fame of some of these women spread through the nation. The combination which they showed of munificent giving, on the one hand, and of rigid self-discipline, on the other, exalted them almost into saints. The two ladies who most fully illustrate the type are Mrs. Bovey and Lady Elizabeth Hastings. Their learning was chiefly in the realm of theology.

Mrs. Bovey,[1] the daughter of a London merchant, was a great heiress and a great beauty and was consequently much sought after. At fifteen she married William Bovey, Esq., Lord of the Manor of Flaxley, Gloucestershire. After seven years of unhappiness she was left a childless widow with a large fortune at her command. She refused to marry again, but entered into a close friendship with Mrs. Mary Pope. The two ladies lived together in retirement for thirty-two years, making it the purpose of their lives to manage Mrs. Bovey's fortune and estate and to dispose of most of the income in wisely regulated charities. Mrs. Bovey was the subject of much praise from all kinds of people. Mrs. Manley gives the following vivid picture of her:

Catherine Riches, Mrs. Bovey (1670-1726)

> She is one of those lofty, black and lasting beauties that strike with Reverence, and yet Delight; there is no Feature in her Face, nor any thing in her Person, her Air and Manner, that could be exchanged for any others, and she not prove a Loser: Then as to her Mind and Conduct, her Judgment, her Sense, her Stedfastness, her Reading, her Wit and Conversation, they are admirable; so much above what is most lovely in the sex, shut but your Eyes, (and allow for the Musick of her Voice) your Mind would be charmed, as thinking yourself conversing with the most knowing, most refined of ours; free from all Levity and Superficialness, her Sense is sold [solid?] and perspicuous. Lovely *Porcia* is so polite, so neat, so perfect an economist, that in taking in all the greater Beauties of Life, she does not disdain to stoop to the most inferiour; in short, she knows all that a Man can know, without despising what, as a woman, she should not be ignorant of.

In 1714 Steele dedicated the second volume of his *Ladies' Library* to her. With his genius for giving delightful compliments, he says: "Thus with the charms of your own sex, and knowledge not inferior to the more learned of ours, a closet, a bower, or some scene of rural nature, has constantly robbed the world of a ladies appearance, who never was beheld but with gladness to her visitants, nor ever admired but with pain to herself."

[1] Manley, Mrs.: *The New Atalantis*, vol. III, p. 245; Ballard: *Memoirs*, p. 440; cf. *Notes and Queries*, 2d Series, vol. IX, pp. 221–22; Wills, Henry: ed. of *Sir Roger de Coverley*, pp. 170–74.

Dr. Hickes, in the Preface to his *Linguarum Septentrionalium Thesaurus* (1702), eulogized this *præstantissima & honestissima matrona* as the *Angliæ nostræ Hypatia Christiana.* She had received no formal education, yet by frequent converse with some of the most learned men of the day and by intense application to study she gained a great share of knowledge. She was interested in educational matters, and she gave with particular pleasure to organizations for the training of poor children. At her death Mrs. Pope, her executor, was instructed to pay large sums to such charitable schemes as the gray-coat school, the blue-coat school, the charity school of Christ's Church Parish in Southwark, and a college to be founded in the Island of Bermuda.

Mrs. Bovey's attractive personality may be further emphasized by the persistence of the rumor identifying her with "the perverse widow" whose charms and whose coldness destroyed the peace of Sir Roger de Coverley's heart. Her beauty, her wealth, her learning, her kindness of heart, her general beneficence, and, finally, her inaccessibility, made her admired, loved, and longed for, till she was idealized into something quite above human nature's daily food.

Catherine Riches's father belonged to the wealthy merchant class of London. It would be interesting if we could know the kind of home life and training given to this young city heiress. Was it the unhappy disciplinary years of her married life that turned her so decisively from the pomps and pleasures apparently awaiting one so young and beautiful and rich?

Lady Elizabeth Hastings (1688-1739)

Lady Elizabeth Hastings was the daughter of Theophilus, seventh earl of Huntingdon, by his first wife, through whom, in 1704, she came into a fortune and the possession of Ledstone Park, an estate near Pontefract, Yorkshire. From twenty-two to her death at fifty-seven Lady Elizabeth lived almost continuously at Ledstone. Of these thirty-five years not a striking event is recorded. Her days were "bound each to each by natural

piety" and her tranquil life developed along an uninterrupted course of charity and devotion.

To live in Yorkshire, in the eighteenth century, was to be buried. Social and intellectual life were alike without sustenance. Yet from this remote home Lady Elizabeth's fame traveled to London and she became the subject of remarkable eulogies. Number 42 of *The Tatler*, written possibly by Congreve, appeared in 1709 when the "divine Aspasia" had been but five years at Ledstone. She must have gone there with well-formed ideas of life, for with no vacillations, no period of experimentation, she seems to have entered immediately on that career of religious contemplation and good works which had, in five years, given her the reputation of being a "female philosopher" of the most exalted type. *The Tatler* paper says that she put into practice the schemes and plans the ancient sages had thought beautiful but inimitable. Steele, in *The Tatler*, number 49, gave perfect expression to the reverent admiration with which Lady Elizabeth had come to be regarded:

> Aspasia must therefore be allowed to be the first of the beauteous Order of Love, whose unaffected freedom, and conscious innocence, give her the attendance of the graces in all her actions. The awful distance which we bear towards her in all our thoughts of her, are certain instances of her being the truest object of love of any of her sex. In this accomplished lady, love is the constant effect, because it is never the design. Yet, though her mien carries much more invitation than command, to behold her is an immediate check to loose behaviour; and to love her is a liberal education.

A somewhat closer view of the life of the Lady Elizabeth comes from casual notes by Thoresby who, in his travels about the northern counties between 1711 and 1724, frequently spent a few days at Ledstone. From the unconnected details scattered through his letters and diaries there emerges a fairly clear picture of a great house exactly ordered on the basis of the religious life. Private prayers, family devotions in which all the servants were included, at several stated hours each day,

preparation for church festivals, frequent assemblages for the reading of sermons and holy books, refreshing conferences on mooted points of doctrine, friendly communion on the present and future joys of the Christian, filled the days to the exclusion of worldly interests. No mother superior could have felt a responsibility more definite or have exerted a power more minutely organized for the promotion of the spiritual welfare of those under her charge.

Lady Hastings was also engaged in schemes of wider application. She became as noted for her benefactions as for the saintliness of her recluse life. "Human learning as the handmaid of religion" was the basis on which her gifts were made. She therefore became definitely associated with the new schemes springing up in England for the education of poor boys and girls. In one of Thoresby's visits they walked across the fields to see the new school she was building and endowing for the absolute maintenance and education of fourteen poor girls. The *Victoria History of the County of Yorkshire* records "Lady Hastings's Schools" at Thorp Arch, Ledsham, Collingham, and Wick. The formal deeds conveying these schools to trustees are dated in 1738, probably because at that time she knew she could not recover from the cancerous affection of which she died the following year. But some of these schools had been established and supported by her much earlier. The account given of the Ledsham school is typical of the others: "These schools are part of the general charity founded by Lady Elizabeth Hastings by deed 14 December, 1738. In a charity school for boys 20 scholars were to be taught and one youth between the ages of 17 and 23 as a charity school-master. The girls' school was for 20 scholars, who were to be clothed partly out of the proceeds of their spinning. The boys' school is now public and elementary, while the girls' school gives a free education in elementary subjects and household duties. The expenses of this school amount to about £400 a year, and this is wholly derived from the endowment." Lady Elizabeth also left a large bequest to Queen's College, Oxford, for poor scholars from

schools in Yorkshire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.[1] Berkeley's missionary project found in her one of its most generous supporters, and her name headed many a list of charities for educational and religious purposes.

So well known did she become that in 1735 a remarkable tribute to her was planned and partly executed. An anonymous donor offered to *The Gentleman's Magazine* a series of prizes for the four best poems entitled *The Christian Hero.* The chief prize was to be a "GOLD MEDAL (*intrinsic value about Ten Pounds*) *which shall have the* HEAD *of the Rt. Hon. the Lady* ELIZABETH HASTINGS *on one Side, and that of James Oglethorpe Esq. on the other, with this Motto,* ENGLAND MAY CHALLENGE THE WORLD, 1736." [2] This announcement was in December, 1735. In the January number for 1736 the editor expressed his great concern at having given offense to a Lady, whose name even they did not venture to mention again, by the publication of the proposed Gold Medal prize without her consent.[3] In February the donor humbly asked her Ladyship's pardon for the uneasiness he had so undesignedly caused her, saying that he had not the honor to know her personally, but had been animated solely by the feeling of respect and deference due to the eminence of her character.[4]

When Lady Hastings died, in 1739, *The Gentleman's Magazine* published a memorial notice said to be by Dr. Johnson. In heavy, analytic fashion it sums up her reputation for sanctity and benevolence, and closes with the statement that "scarce any age has afforded a greater Blessing to many, or a brighter Pattern to all." [5] The year after her death, Law, the noted author of *The Serious Call,* cited Lady Hastings as a sufficient refutation of the charge that saintliness was not a natural product of the English Church. In 1741 Wilford's stately folio contained a laudatory account of Lady Hastings, and in 1742 Mr. Barnard published *An Historical Character, relating*

[1] *A History of the County of Yorkshire,* vol. 1, p. 499.
[2] *The Gentleman's Magazine,* vol. 5, p. 778.
[3] *Ibid.,* vol. 6, p. 42. [4] *Ibid.,* vol. 6, p. 99. [5] *Ibid.,* vol. 10, p. 36.

to the holy and exemplary Life of the Right Honourable Lady Elizabeth Hastings. To which are added, 1. One of the Codicils of her last Will, setting forth her Devise of Lands to the Provost and Scholars of Queen's College in Oxford, for the interest of 18 Northern Schools. 2. Some Observations therefrom. 3. A Schedule of her other perpetual Charities, with the Principal Rules for their Administration.

Few of the people who praised Lady Hastings knew her personally. Even more strongly than in the case of Mrs. Bovey there seems to have grown up in the public mind a kind of idealized picture of her. She was a saint set apart from the world, not only by a voluntary isolation, but by virtue of her beauty, beneficence, and nobility. She was enshrined. The reverence, affection, and praise accorded her have a definite note of Platonism. She becomes an embodiment of the highest charm and excellence, and the actual "Lady Betty" seems lost in the process.

What were the diversions at Ledstone? Lady Elizabeth's four younger half-sisters, Anne, Frances, Catherine, and Margaret, usually lived with her. After the death of Lady Elizabeth, Margaret, who had become a convert to Methodism, married one of the leaders in that new communion and it was through her influence that Selina, the wife of Theophilus, the brother of these young ladies, was likewise converted to Methodism. The five sisters were apparently a unit in their predisposition to a religious life. But they were too young and too free not to have had some other elements in their life. Had they any such relief as the book-binding at Little Gidding? Our knowledge of the life at Ledstone is tantalizingly incomplete because every one who wrote about Lady Elizabeth took at once an exalted tone, and generalized his picture into abstractions.

Lady Huntingdon (1707-91)

Closely connected with Lady Hastings and the life at Ledstone is another leader in the religious world, the famous Lady Huntingdon, the wife of Lady Hastings's brother Theophilus. Margaret Hastings had ac-

cepted the doctrines of the Methodists and through her influence Lady Huntingdon allied herself with the same obscure body. Lady Huntingdon was from childhood introspective and religious. As the daughter of Earl Ferrars and the wife of the Earl of Huntingdon, a brilliant social career was almost inevitable. But in the midst of the splendid scenes in which she took a vivacious and apparently happy part she was spiritually aloof. She was always resisting the encroachments of the world, and striving by self-denial, a rigid course of devotional exercises, and systematic beneficences, to secure inward peace. But she never came into a free and joyous religious consciousness till she accepted the new doctrines taught by the group of Oxford men known as Methodists.[1] In 1739 she sent for John and Charles Wesley to visit her and she became a fearless advocate of their views. After her husband's death in 1746 she devoted her time, her great wealth, and her influence to the cause of Methodism. With several clergymen, her two daughters, her sisters, Anne and Frances, and a few friends, she made a sort of home missionary tour from Bath through Wales for the purpose of studying the needs of the poor in the matter of religious education. In 1748–49 she opened her fine mansion in Park Street, London, for Methodist preaching services. The most distinguished men and women of the time attended these services, but not always as reverent listeners. The whole scheme was met with varying degrees of ridicule. Coventry wrote a description of the meetings at Park Lane, it is supposed, in his account of "Lady Harridan" and her assembly:

It was a sisterhood of the godly, met together to bewail the vanities of human life, and congratulate one another on their breaking from the enchantments of a sinful world.

The causes which had converted them to Methodism, were as various as the characters of the converts. Some, the ill success of their charms had driven to despair; others, a consciousness of too great

[1] *Lady Huntingdon and her Friends.* Compiled by Mrs. Helen C. Knight, p. 18.

success had touched with repentance. . . . But the greater part, like the noble president, were women fatigued and worn out in the vanities of life, the superannuated jades of pleasure, who, being grown sick of themselves, and weary of the world, were now fled to Methodism, as the newest sort of folly that had lately been invented.[1]

One particularly offensive element in Methodism to people who set store by birth and breeding was its leveling effect. Social position counted for little in the face of the all-important classification into saints and sinners. The Duchess of Buckingham wrote in violent protest: "The doctrines of these preachers are most repulsive, and strongly tinctured with impertinence and disrespect towards their superiors, in perpetually endeavoring to level all ranks and do away with all distinctions. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches that crawl upon the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting, and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding." [2]

[1] Coventry, Francis: *Pompey the Little*, bk. I, chap. XL.

[2] This conception of a divinely authorized aristocracy governed by a special set of laws tallies with the opinion formulated by Dr. George Hickes in a sermon preached before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London in 1684. Dr. Hickes justified the presence of the poor in the body politic, as necessary to the very existence of the State:

"But this Civil Equality is morally impossible, because no Commonweal, little or great, can subsist without Poor. They are necessary, for the establishment of Superiority, and Subjection in Humane Societies, where there must be Members of Dishonour, as well as Honour, and some to serve and obey, as well as others to command. The Poor are the Hands and Feet of the Body Politick, the *Gibeonites* and *Nethinims* in all Countries, who hew the Wood, and draw the Water of the Rich. They Plow our Lands, and dig our Quarries, and cleanse our Streets, nay, those, who fight our battels in the defence of their Country, are the *Poor Souldiers*, who, as the Legions of *Blœcus* once complained in a Mutiny, sell their lives for seven pence a day. As there must be Rich to be, like the Centurian in the Gospel, in Authority: so there must be Poor, to whom they may say, *Go unto one, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh;* but were all equally rich, there could be no subordination, none to command, nor none to serve. But in such case, the Body Politick must dissolve, as the Natural body was like to do in the Fable of *Agrippa*, when the rest of the Members would work no longer for the Belly, which, they thought did nothing at all."

The fruition of Lady Huntingdon's remarkable work belongs later in the century, but its inception is between 1739 and 1760 and is of great importance.

DRAMATIC WRITERS

In July, 1867, there was dispersed at Sotheby's rooms the library of the Reverend A. J. Stainforth. "The collection was formed entirely of works of British and American poetesses and female dramatic writers. The books were arranged in over three thousand lots, and the catalogue extends to 166 pages." That Mr. Stainforth spared neither money nor diligence in securing the books for this collection is evident from a single illustration, namely, his search for so obscure a book as *Eliza's Babes*. "When Mr. Stainforth was forming his collection of *Female Poets* without regard to cost, he failed to procure a copy of *Eliza's Babes*, although the hue and cry was circulated far and near." [1] I have not had access to this catalogue and I do not know how many items the "three thousand lots" contain, nor how many individual names are catalogued. If the arrangement is chronological it would doubtless serve to indicate the very rapid spread of female authors after about 1750. Yet even the century from 1650 to 1750 is not without its large contribution. In the preceding sections of this study there has been some indication of the mass of devotional and polemical writing by women. Among poets, playwrights, essayists, novelists, and letter-writers we shall find not only an even greater volume of production, but work of higher intrinsic value.

The Duchess of Newcastle wrote numerous plays. Twenty-one were published in 1662, and in 1668 five more appeared.

[1] In 1656 there appeared a book by Elizabeth Major entitled *Honey on the Rod, or a Comfortable Contemplation for one in Affliction, with Sundry Poems. By the Unworthiest of the Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ.* In 1652 had appeared anonymously *Eliza's Babes, or the Virgin's Offerings.* A detailed examination of the two books leads to a surmise that they are by the same author. What is probably a unique copy of *Eliza's Babes* is in the British Museum. (*Notes and Queries*, 7th Series, vol. III, p. 502.)

The Duchess of Newcastle (cir. 1625-1673)

They are described as hardly more than allegorical dialogues arranged in successive scenes, but without plot, and showing no power of dramatic portrayal. The Duchess herself is evidently the original of several of the characters. In her plays as in her scientific studies the particular boast of the Duchess is that whatever she writes is spun out of her own fancy:

> But noble readers, do not think my plays
> Are such as have been writ in former days;
> As Johnson, Shakespear, Beaumont, Fletcher writ,
> Mine want their learning, reading, language, wit.
> The Latin phrases, I could never tell,
> But Johnson could, which made him write so well.
> Greek, Latin poets I could never read,
> Not their historians, but our English Speed:
> I could not steal their wit, nor plots out-take;
> All my plays plots, my own poor brain did make.
> From Plutarch's story, I ne'er took a plot,
> Nor from romances, nor from Don Quixote.[1]

It goes without saying that these plays were not suited for stage presentation, and, in point of fact, very few of them were ever put into rehearsal. One of the plays that did appear drew a great crowd, but the motive was curiosity to see the Duchess rather than any interest in the play. Pepys, who went to hear this play March 30, 1667, wrote concerning it, and its author:

> The whole story of this lady is a romance and all she does is romantic. Her footmen in velvet coats, and herself in antique dress, as they say; and was the other day at her own play, "The Humorous Lovers"; the most ridiculous thing that ever was wrote, but she and her Lord mightily pleased with it: and she at the end, made her respects to the players, and did give them thanks. There is as much expectation of her coming to Court, that so people may come to see her, as if it were the Queen of Sheba.

The only important dramatic work by a woman during the second half of the seventeenth century was by Mrs. Behn.

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. II, p. 163.

Aphra Amis, Mrs. Behn (1640-1689)

She was born at Wye, in Kent.[1] While she was still very young the Amis family went to Surinam, West Indies, where Aphra's girlhood was spent. At about twenty-three [2] she returned to England and soon thereafter married Mr. Behn, a London merchant of Dutch parentage. At his death, before 1666, she was left nearly penniless. For a short time she was in Holland as a secret political agent for the English court. But her services received scant official recognition and the pay was so meager and uncertain that she returned to England and began to look about for other means of support. The new passion for the theater was not yet exhausted and she turned instinctively to play-writing as her most hopeful resource. During the years 1670–1689 her literary output extended into many other fields and shows continuous work at high pressure. Not only was she one of the chief assets of the Duke's Theater as a playwright, but she also translated French verse and prose; she wrote numerous occasional poems; she edited miscellanies; and she wrote novels. Her comedies had a most flattering contemporary vogue and some of them maintained their popularity well into the next century. She satisfied the taste of the day for rapid, bustling plots, with many and varied characters, and her intrigues were cleverly manipulated, while she surpassed most of her contemporaries in vivacious, easy, rapid dialogue. She is never dull or insipid. Her plays show that she had a vigorous mind, an overflow of spirits, a reckless mental energy. There is apparent a sense of power conscious of itself and careless of precedents or restrictions. In defiance of Ben Jonson, Dryden, and Shadwell she spoke contemptuously of "the musty unities." The material for her plays she took wherever she found it, from preceding plays, from romances, from real life, used it, made it over, and often so improved it that she could justifiably laugh at charges of plagiarism. One charge she could not evade and that had to

[1] Lady Winchilsea: *Circuit of Apollo*, note. (Ed. Reynolds, Myra.)

[2] Behn, Aphra: *Works*, 6 vols.; Cibber, *Lives of the Poets*, vol. III, pp. 17–23.

do with the immorality of her writings. Dryden, Shadwell, Wycherley, and Etherege, and the audiences who applauded their plays, seemed to find the *vis comica* in an open indecency of character, situation, and conversation that is to-day almost unbelievable. And of Mrs. Behn it must be admitted that she vied with the most corrupt. She said, in extenuation, as Dryden also said in answer to Jeremy Collier's strictures, that she wrote to please. She did not consider comedy "a reforming or converting agent," it was meant to be "an entertainment." Her emphasis on the vicious elements of the life about her was a clear case of supply and demand, but it had an unhappy personal result. There early gathered about her name a hostile tradition based on the fact that she was not only a woman writer, but an eminently successful woman writer, and on the further fact that, being a woman, she had not the modest reserve for which the chaste Orinda was idolized, but presented debaucheries in the bold and open manner characteristic of contemporary male playwrights. This hostile tradition, crystallized by Pope in a witty couplet,[1] became a commonplace of adverse criticism, and Astræa's undeniable talents have sunk into oblivion. A general revival of Mrs. Behn's comedies would be impossible, undesirable, but by the student of social and political history in the Restoration period they cannot be ignored.

Mrs. Behn's novels are now as little known as her plays, but in her own day were very popular. *Oroonoko*, the first and by far the best, was based on her life in Surinam. At a time when French heroic romances, with their high-flown adventures, unreal characters, and stilted dialogue, were the only works of fiction, Mrs. Behn's short, simple, vigorous, and affecting story of real life comes with a startling sense of novelty.[2] The vivid portrayal of the cruelties incident to the slave trade, though probably written without didactic intent, gives the story a modern humanitarian note not unprophetic of *Uncle Tom's*

[1] *The Epistle to Augustus*, ll. 290–91.

[2] Kavanagh, Julia. *English Women of Letters*, vol. I, chap. II.

MRS. APHRA BEHN

From a picture by Mary Beale in the collection of his Grace the Duke of Buckingham
Drawn by T. Uwins. Engraved by J. Fittler, A.R.A. From an engraving
in *Effigies Poeticae*, London, 1824, Vol. II

Cabin. And the description of the Indian Prince as the ideal natural man, his innate virtues in their pristine purity unvitiated by civilization, foreshadows the theories of Rousseau. The descriptions of nature, however exaggerated, are vivid and attractive, and show a delight in scenic detail not found again in fiction before Mrs. Collyer in 1730. Thus in four ways, choice of real life as a theme, interest in scenery, emphasis on the natural man, and on humanitarianism, Mrs. Behn's little story links itself with the novel of the future rather than with the romances of the past. In the plays Mrs. Behn showed exceptional ability in a realm in which women have seldom excelled. In her novels she marked out a path where women have gained marked literary success.

In one other way she is an important, outstanding figure. She was the first woman in England who made authorship a profession, the first one who definitely set out to earn her living by her pen. It is unfortunate that the first literary lady to achieve "economic independence" should likewise be the first whose writings were notably immoral. But it is a law of human nature that an unaccustomed freedom seldom contents itself in its early exercise of power with destroying merely the unjust bonds by which it has been confined. Freedom is likely to begin by being license. And when Aphra Behn so far defied convention as to compete with men as a playwright on the public stage, when she openly criticized her contemporaries and boasted that her comedies did not fall below most that she read, she had so set herself apart in an unfeminine realm that prudishness and decency fell together. Psychologically the actress and the writer of comedies seem to have gone through similar experiences.

Plays between 1696 and 1706

Mrs. Behn had no feminine contemporary rivals, but later in the century a number of women attempted to write for the stage. In Genest's record for Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields seven plays by six women are listed in 1696. In the ensuing ten years at least eighteen

more plays by women appeared. This exceptional activity did not pass without satiric comment. In 1697 "W. M.'s" *Female Wits*,[1] with its attack on Miss Trotter, Mrs. Manley, and Mrs. Pix, was acted six times without intermission, a run showing exceptional popularity. In 1702 the hostility of the wits towards women playwrights was again voiced in Gildon's *The Two Stages*.[2] Genest says that about this time "prejudice against females rose so high that Mrs. Centlivre in *Stolen Heiress* and Mrs. Pix in *Conquest of Spain* spoke of their plays as if by men." [3] The authors of these twenty-five plays were Miss Trotter, Mrs. Pix, Mrs. Manley, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Wiseman, "A Lady," "A Young Lady," "A Lady of Quality," and "A Club of Ladies." Fourteen of the plays were tragedies, the best one being, probably, Miss Trotter's *Fatal Friendship*, almost the only one of the fourteen that survived on the stage after its initial season. The writers of comedy were more successful.

Few of these authors need particular notice. Miss Trotter's work has already been discussed.[4] Mrs. Manley's three plays appeared at ten-year intervals, 1696, 1706, 1717. They were unsuccessful on the stage and they have no qualities that would claim the reader's attention. It is in fiction, not in drama, that Mrs. Manley gained her reputation.

Mrs. Pix (1666-1720?)

Mrs. Pix, daughter of the Reverend Roger Griffith, Vicar of Nettlested in Oxfordshire, and wife of George Pix, a merchant tailor of London, was thirty when she brought out her first play. During the ensuing ten years she put on the stage five tragedies, one comedy, and possibly other plays not under her name. Her tragedies, though written in blank verse, yet belong to the heroic *genre*, and their chief interest lies in the fact that they represent that *genre* in its dying throes. In Mrs. Pix's tragedies the heroic play of

[1] See p. 386. [2] See p. 388.
[3] Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage*, vol. II, p. 104.
[4] See pp. 104–09.

Dryden's day could look upon its enfeebled and distorted image. We have the war background, the remoteness of time and place, the historical source with free alterations of persons and events, that mark the heroic drama. The type characters are the same. The heroine is unapproachable in beauty, unassailable in virtue. The hero, godlike in personal prowess, the idol of the army, framed by nature to be the darling joy of womankind, cares for glory only that he may lay it at the feet of his beloved. Blest by her he will leave unenvied monarchs to "fight for this Dunghil Earth." This noble pair, joined by indissoluble vows or by a secret marriage, are subjected by the plot to the machinations of the beautiful wicked woman in whose heart has sprung into being a passion for the hero, and to the arrogant demands of the tyrant who claims the heroine as his prey. The result is disaster and the last act is a holocaust. Fights, murders, and suicides carry off all the important *dramatis personæ*. Disguises, mistaken identity, the ravings of sudden madness, ghosts, and secret documents, determine the events of the play. Passion is torn into exclamatory tatters from the first scene to the last. We have rant and bluster and tortured similes, until taste, good sense, and correct English suffer the same fate as the chief characters. The description of Mrs. Pix as "a fat female author," appropriately called "Mrs. Wellfed," would prepare us for something more placid than the chaos into which she leads us.

The one possible explanation of Mrs. Pix's acceptance year after year by the audiences of Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields is that the business of her plays never lags. They are short, full of action and surprising turns. An event is never delayed by a disquisition. They also gave excellent opportunity for scenic effects of palaces, prisons, and camps.

The only woman writer of plays of real importance in this period is Susanna Centlivre.[1] She was the daughter of a Mr.

[1] Mrs. Inchbald: *The British Theatre*, vol. XI; Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. IV, pp. 58–61.

Susanna Freeman, Mrs. Centlivre (1680?-1723)

Freeman of Holbeach, Lincolnshire. He is said to have had a considerable estate at the time of the Restoration, but being a zealous dissenter, he was persecuted, his estates were confiscated, and he was obliged to seek refuge in Ireland, where Susanna was born. Her early life is involved in obscurity, but there cling to her name biographical details of a picturesque and romantic sort, though of rather questionable authenticity. Left an orphan at nine and subjected to the ill-usage of a stepmother, the child, at twelve, finally escapes and makes her way to London which she enters penniless, innocent, beautiful. She is rescued by a Cambridge student, a Mr. Hammond, and disguised as a boy she accompanies him to the University. Later she marries the nephew of Stephen Fox, but is left a widow before she is sixteen. A second marriage to a Mr. Carroll results in a second widowhood before she is eighteen. At twenty her first tragedy is played at Drury Lane. She appears soon after this as an actress in country theaters. Mrs. Behn and Mrs. Haywood could ask no richer material for an adventure novel. Then suddenly the scene changes. The buffeted Susanna marries Mr. Centlivre, Queen Anne's chief pastry-cook, and settles down into a comfortable, orderly, and apparently happy domestic life, of which, however, we know in reality even less than of her early kaleidoscopic career.[1] The events of her life are the presentation and publication of her plays.

Before her marriage in 1706 she had begun the series of comedies of which, between 1703 and 1722, she wrote seventeen. They were all successful, and four of them, *The Gamester* (1705), *The Busy Body* (1709), *The Wonder: A Woman Keeps a Secret* (1714), and *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1718), held a fairly prominent place on the stage through the century.

In 1761 there was published a fine edition of her works in three volumes. There is a preliminary address "To the World" in which an anonymous woman endeavors to do jus-

[1] Centlivre, Susanna: *Works*. "To the World."

tice to "The Manes of the never to be forgotten Mrs. Centlivre." She thus recounts the difficulties Mrs. Centlivre encountered as a female author:

She was even ashamed to proclaim her own great Genius, probably because the Custom of the Times discountenanced poetical Excellence in a Female. The Gentlemen of the Quill published it not, perhaps envying her superior Talents; and her Bookseller, complying with national Prejudices, put a fictitious Name to her Love's Contrivance, thro' Fear that the Work shou'd be condemned if known to be Feminine. With modest Diffidence she sent her Performances, like Orphans, into the World, without so much as a Nobleman to protect them; but they did not need to be supported by Interest, they were admired as soon as known, their real Standard, Merit, brought crowding Spectators to the playhouses, and the female Author, tho' unknown, heard Applauses, such as have since been heaped on that great Author and Actor *Colley Cibber*.

Her play of the Busy Body, when known to be the Work of a Woman scarce defray'd the Expences of the First Night. The thin audience were pleased, and caused a full House the Second; the Third was crowded, and so on to the Thirteenth, when it was stopt, on account of the advanced Season; but the following Winter it appear'd again with Applause, and for Six Nights successively, was acted by rival Players, both at *Drury Lane* and at the *Hay-Market* Houses. See here the Effects of Prejudice, a Woman who did Honour to the Nation, suffer'd because she was a Woman. Are these things fit and becoming a free-born People, who call themselves polite and civilized! Hold! let my Pen stop, and not reproach the present Age for the Sins of their Fathers. . . .

A Poet is born so, not made by Rules; and is there not an equal Chance that the Poetical Birth should be female as well as male? . . . I could wish that some young Ladies of my Acquaintance, now in Boarding Schools, had classical Education, which would improve their Minds, furnish them with a more general Knowledge, and of course better fit them for Conversation, and the Management of Business.

The author of "To the World" finds great satisfaction in the union of Mrs. Lennox with "Lord Corke and Mr. Samuel Johnson" in the translation of *Brumoy's Greek Theatre*.

This convinces me [she says] that not only that barbarous Custom of denying Women to have Souls, begins to be rejected as foolish

and absurd, but also that foolish Assertion, that Female Minds are not capable of producing literary Works, equal even to those of *Pope*, now loses Ground, and probably the next Age may be taught by our pens that our Geniuses have been hitherto cramped and smothered, but not extinguished, and that the Sovereignty which the male Part of the Creation have, until now usurped over us, is unreasonably arbitrary: And, further, that our natural Abilities entitle us to a larger Share, not only in Literary Decisions, but that, with the present Directors, we are equally entitled to Power both in Church and State. . . ."

In 1764 Baker, in *Biographia Dramatica*, gave an account of Mrs. Centlivre's work, and most eighteenth-century dramatic collections included plays by her. In 1776 *The New English Theatre*, which professed to assemble "the most Valuable Plays which have been Acted on the London Stage," published *The Busy Body*, *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, and *The Wonder*. Her plays were included by John Bell in various collections from 1776 to 1792. Mrs. Inchbald, in her *British Theatre* (1808), and Oxberry, in *The New English Drama*, 1818–1824, carried the publication of her plays into the nineteenth century. Such brief notices as occur are highly laudatory. Mr. Baker says: "In a word we cannot help giving it as our opinion, that if we do not allow her to be the very first of our female writers for the stage, she has but one above her, and may justly be placed next to her predecessor in dramatic glory, the great Mrs. Behn." Nearly half a century later Mrs. Inchbald gave even stronger praise when she said that Mrs. Centlivre "ranks in the first class of our comic dramatists." Of the *Busy Body* Mrs. Inchbald said: "This comedy is by far her best work. In excellence of fable, strength of character, and intricacy of occurrences, it forms one of the most entertaining exhibitions the theatre can boast." Of *The Wonder* she wrote: "Garrick thought Don Felix worthy his most powerful exertions, in describing the passion of jealousy; and his character was upon the lists with the favorite parts he performed. . . . Mrs. Centlivre has somewhere said 'the Muses, like most females, are least liberal to their own sex.' She was ungrateful if she did not acknowledge her obligation to them in

the composition of this work; for they presided with no niggardly influence over the whole production."

Modern study of Mrs. Centlivre's work has taken a surprising turn. It has to do entirely with *Quellen* and *Verhältnisse*. In 1900–1905 there were seven German dissertations dealing with the sources of her plays.[1]

The impulse to play-writing seems to have expended itself with Mrs. Centlivre. Hannah Cowley's popular *Belle's Stratagem* (1782) is the only other play of even moderate importance through the rest of the century. The situation with regard to play-writing is rather curious. Virtuous ladies were at liberty to write tragedies because tragedies were supposed to be moral and elevating. But unfortunately none of these ladies succeeded in tragedy. On the other hand, ladies who were not virtuous wrote comedies and were eminently successful. The realm between tragedy and comedy, the sentimental comedy, in its combination of didacticism and morality with social studies from middle-class life and the opportunity for rapid intrigue, might have seemed the very medium in which women could most advantageously work. But the successful sentimental comedies from *The Conscious Lovers* to *False Delicacy* were written by men playwrights.

General Learning and Literary Work

Besides the women whose work was sufficiently specialized to be grouped under particular subjects or species there

[1] Hobohm: *Das Verhältniss von Sus. Centlivre's "Love at a Venture" zu Thomas Corneille's "Le Gallant Double."* (Hall. Diss. 1900.) Wüllenweber: *Mrs. Centlivre's Lustspiel "Love's Contrivance" und seine Quellen.* (Hall. Diss. 1900.) Strube: *Sus. Centlivre's Lustspiel "The Stolen Heiress" und sein Verhältniss zu "The Heir" von Thomas May.* (Hall. Diss. 1900.) Grober: *Das Verhältniss von Sus. Centlivre's Lustspiel "The Gamester" zu Regnard's Lustspiel "Le Joneur."* (Hall. Diss. 1900.) Weidler: *Das Verhältniss von Mrs. Centlivre's "The Busy Body" zu Molière's "L'Etourdi" und Ben Jonson's "The Divill is an Ass."* (Hall. Diss. 1900.) Ohnsorg: *John Lacy's "Dumb Lady," Mrs. Centlivre's "Love's Contrivance" und Henry Fielding's "Mock Doctor" in ihrem Verhältniss zu einander und zu ihrer gemeinshaftlichen Quelle.* (Rostock. Diss. 1900.) Poelchau: *Susannah Centlivre's Tragödie "The Cruel Gift" in ihrem Verhältniss zur Quelle Boccaccio's Decameron IV.* (Hall. Diss. 1905.)

were many women to whom learning was itself an avocation with no thought of any literary outcome, and there were many more whose interests were in the general field of *belles-lettres* and who wrote either in verse or in prose, and on such varied themes as the occasion might suggest. Since no effective principle of classification suggests itself in connection with these writers, it will probably be in the interests of clearness to discuss them in an order as nearly chronological as may be.

Joan Philips (fl. 1679)

An early, almost unknown, little volume of poems, published in 1679 under the title, *Female Poems on Several Occasions. Written by Ephelia*, is the work of Joan Philips whose portrait accompanies the poems. Such of Miss Philips's poems as can be dated belong but a year or two before the publication of the book. She apparently had some rather close connection with court circles. Her little volume is dedicated to the "Most Excellent Princess Mary, Dutchess of Richmond and Lennox"; she sends a congratulatory poem to Charles II on the discovery of the Popish Plot; and she writes an elegy on Archbishop Sheldon.

Her poems are not, however, usually concerned with court and state. The "Several Occasions" calling forth her verse are chiefly amatory or friendly. Her love-poems are highly personal. From poem to poem the lady pursues the uneven and finally disastrous course of her love for "Strephon," sometimes less poetically addressed as "F. G." From "Love's First Approach" to Strephon's final decisive nuptials with a wealthier Fair One the hopes and despairs of Ephelia are spread before us. She can find no surcease from sorrow. Books fail her as a resource, and her pen proves as recalcitrant as that of the White King in Looking Glass Land.

> Sometimes with Books I would divert my mind,
> But nothing there but F's and G's I find.
> Sometimes to ease my Grief, my Pen I take
> But it no letters but F. G. will make.

Miss Philips's friendship poems, in their addresses to "the

honoured Eugenia," "the beauteous Marinda," to "Damon," and to "Phylocles inviting him to friendship" show how definitely Ephelia formed herself on the model of the great Orinda whom she praises as having reached the summit of excellence.

Miss Philips also wrote in awe-struck admiration of "Madam *Behn*" whose "strenuous polite lines" seemed to her a union of "Strong and Sweet" such as might be envied by the wittiest men. And she followed in the footsteps of Mrs. Behn to the extent of writing one comedy, *The Pair-Royal of Coxcombs* which had the humble success of being acted at a dancing-school. The deprecatory Prologue and Epilogue were included in her poems together with some of the love-songs in the play.

Ephelia seems to spread her life before us, but as a personage in the real world she escapes us. She and Strephon have faded into obscurity. She is contemporary in comedy with Mrs. Behn. Had they some literary comradeship? But twelve years separate the published work of Joan Philips from that of Mrs. Katherine Philips. Were the two poetesses perhaps related? Lady Winchilsea was eighteen when the volume by Ephelia appeared. About fifteen years later we find Lady Winchilsea as "Ardealia" writing on Friendship to one "Ephelia." Could it possibly be this Ephelia? Did Ephelia publish the poems herself with her own portrait as frontispiece? If so she was strangely lacking in the reserve characteristic of Orinda and Ardelia. But even with no biographical data whereby to substantiate or correct the poems, the thin little volume holds its place of interest because of its early date and because of the literary ambitions it indicates.

Anne Killigrew came of a family prominent in the court of Charles II. Her uncle Thomas, the "court wit," was given a patent for the Theater Royal; her uncle Henry was admiral under James, Duke of York; her father was chaplain to James and Master of the Savoy; and Anne was maid of honor to Mary of Modena. She was born in St. Martin's Lane and died at her father's lodgings within

Anne Killigrew (1660-1685)

the Cloisters of Westminster. London and the court were her habitat. Ballard says she had "a polite education," but no details are given. She apparently was taught the accomplishments counted necessary for a girl in her social position. That she went beyond mediocrity in painting we have already seen.[1] In poetry, also, according to Dryden, she excelled. The thin volume of her published verse (1686) scarcely justifies his eulogy, but Wood, in *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, says that Dryden in no way exceeds the truth. Her poems sent anonymously from hand to hand received high praise and were even at first attributed to the best poets of the age. They gradually came to be known as hers, but she gives no evidence of having suffered any contumely as a poetess. She has nowhere any complaint of undue or irritating feminine limitations. She is pessimistic, scornful, rather hard and drastic, in her judgments, but it is greed for gold, ambition for place or power, unbridled love, atheism, war, that are the subjects of her invective. There is not a light or playful, or even a happy, touch in her poems. They have a crude virility, what Dryden calls a "noble vigour," and a contemptuous outlook on "the truly wretched Human Race."

Personally Miss Killigrew must have been attractive. Her epitaph eulogizes her as a daughter and a sister:

> In a numerous race
> And vertuous, the highest place
> None envy'd her: sisters, brothers,
> Her admirers were and lovers:
> She was to all s' obliging sweet,
> All in one love to her did meet.

And she was an acknowledged favorite at court, especially with her royal master and mistress. Dryden emphasizes her beauty and charm. The portrait she painted of herself shows her in no sense averse to pomps and vanities of attire.[2] In actual life she must have moved along in fairly smooth accord with

[1] See p. 85, 86.

[2] See mezzotint engraving by Becket in 1686 edition of her poems.

the life about her, but there could have been few ladies within the circle of the court more alien to it in spirit than Anne Killigrew. It is difficult to place her mentally amid the gayeties of London life. She presents an anomaly. To be young, beautiful, gifted, high in social opportunities, praised and loved, and yet to look out upon life with bitterness and distaste, to be conscious at twenty-five that all this world has to offer will turn to dust and ashes in the mouth — such is the curious combination we find in her. While the few accessible details concerning her indicate a considerable degree of lovableness, her poems are those of an implacable moral censor.

Anne Killigrew was but four when Mrs. Philips died, but the spell of the "Matchless Orinda" descended early upon her, and she gives one of the earliest of the many eulogies written by women concerning their distinguished ancestor among British Muses.

> Orinda (Albion, and her sex's grace)
> Ow'd not her glory to a beauteous face:
> It was her radiant soul that shone within,
> Which struck a lustre thro' her outward skin;
> That did her lips and cheeks with roses dye,
> Advanc'd her heighth, and sparkled in her eye.
> Nor did her sex at all obstruct her fame.
> But high'r 'mongst the stars it fixt her name;
> What she did write, not only all allow'd,
> But ev'ry laurel, to her laurel bow'd!

Mrs. Evelyn (1635-1709) and Mary Evelyn (1665-85)

John Evelyn's flattering letter to the Duchess of Newcastle, already quoted, with its list of learned women, his suggestion to Lord Cornbury that he add two ladies to his gallery of notables, the trouble he took to conduct a party of ladies to see the girls' "colleges" at Hackney, and various references in *Numismata* (1697) indicate a genuine interest in the intellectual achievements of women. Mrs. Evelyn seems at first to have been of a different temper. She wrote as follows to her son's tutor, Mr. Bohun, in 1672:

Women were not borne to reade authors, and censure the learned, to compare lives and judge of virtues, to give rules of morality, and sacrifice to the Muses. We are willing to acknowledge all time borrowed from family duties misspent; the care of children's education, observing a husband's commands, assisting the sick, relieving the poore, and being serviceable to our friends, are of sufficient weight to employ the most improved capacities amongst us. If sometimes it happens by accident that one of a thousand aspires a little higher, her fate commonly exposes her to wonder, but adds little to esteeme. The distaffe will defend our quarrels as well as the sword, and the needle is as instructive as the penne. A heroine is a kind of prodigy: the influence of a blazing starre is not more dangerous, or more avoyded. Though I have lived under the roofe of the learned, and in the neighborhood of science, it has had no other effect on a temper like mine, but that of admiration.

But these very letters, in which Mrs. Evelyn disclaims learning, would be a capital point in refutation of Macaulay's charge of general feminine illiteracy. In subject-matter, in style, and in the mechanics of writing they show a development not unworthy of that "roofe of the learned" under which she dwelt. At the time Mrs. Evelyn wrote the letter just quoted her daughter Mary was but six years old, but her literary and artistic tastes must have soon become manifest, for when she died of small-pox at nineteen she was an accomplished young woman, on the road, apparently, to be the dangerous "blazing starre" her mother decried, and her training must have been going on for ten or twelve years in the home with the active connivance of her parents. Her father was exceedingly proud, not only of her excellence in dancing and music, but especially, it would seem, of her passion for books. She had, he said, "read abundance of history, and all the best poets, even Terence, Plautus, Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid; all the best romances and modern poems." After her death they found among her papers a commonplace book in which she had entered "an incredible number of selections from historians, poets, travellers." Her piety and her impulse towards expression were both shown in the many "resolutions, contemplations, prayers and devotions" she left in writ-

ten form. Of the extent to which both Mrs. Evelyn and her daughter carried their work in painting and enamel I have already spoken.[1]

The Evelyn household may stand doubtless as one of many where, without any tinge of pedantry or any especial outward manifestations of learning, there was yet a natural interest in arts and letters, an interest shared, in quite a simple, normal way by all the members of the family.

The Honorable Miss Dudleya North (1675-1712)

The Honorable Miss Dudleya North was a niece of the Honorable Roger North, and it is through the memorable *Lives of the Norths* that we come upon an account of her life. Dudleya and her two younger brothers were brought up together. She learned the same lessons and read the same books as her brothers, and joined in their amusements. When they went to the University, she carried on her studies at home and she became one of the most highly cultured and learned women of her time. After she had conquered Greek and Latin she advanced to Hebrew, and finally, "by a long and severe course of study," she gained "a competent knowledge in the whole circle of Oriental learning." Her uncle Roger laconically described her life as follows: "The eldest sister, Catharine, died . . . and the youngest, named Dudleya, having emaciated herself with study whereby she had made familiar to her, not only Greek and Latin, but the Oriental languages, under the infliction of a sedentery distemper, died also."

The fine collection of Oriental books left by Miss North was given by her brother, Lord North and Grey, to the parochial library at Rougham in Norfolk. Her uncle wrote: "I have had a design to build a parochial library at Rougham, and now shall finish it this summer, and placing my niece's books there, entitle the Catalogue *Ex dono*, etc., *e libris eruditissimæ virginis*, etc., which will be a monument more lasting than marble." [2]

[1] See pp. 85–86.

[2] *The Lives of the Norths*, vol. I, p. 7; vol. III, pp. 262, 295.

Anne Lee, Lady Wharton (1632?-1685)

Anne Lee, the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Henry Lee, married in 1673 Thomas Wharton, whose chief interest in her was based on the large dowry she brought him. The unhappiness of her married life received some alleviation from the wise and steadfast friendship of Dr. Gilbert Burnet. In 1680–81, she was in France for her health and during this time she corresponded regularly with Dr. Burnet. He addressed to her various poems with titles such as *The Secrets of Friendship, Friendship's Mysteries, Pure Love,* and *Love's Magnetism.* She wrote a tragedy in blank verse on the love of Ovid for Julia, a number of Scripture paraphrases, and some occasional poems.[1] Some of these poems drew approving verses from Dryden in his *Eleonora,* a panegyrical poem on the death of Mrs. Wharton's elder sister, Lady Abingdon, in 1691, and from Waller, who, in his old age, was still equal to flattering a new "Chloris," under which name he celebrated her learning and her poetry.

Ann Baynard (1672-1697)

Ann Baynard had a natural propensity to learning and her father Dr. Edward Baynard, Fellow of the College of Physicians, London, gave her a very liberal education. Dr. Prude[2] says of her:

> As for learning, whether it be to know and understand natural causes and events, to know the courses of the sun, moon, and stars; the qualities of herbs and plants; to be acquainted with the demonstrable verities of the mathematicks; the study of philosophy; the writings of the antients; and that in their own proper language, without the help of an interpreter: These and the like are the most noble accomplishments of the human mind, and accordingly do bring great delight and satis-

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[1] Verses by that "Excellent Poetess, Mrs. Wharton," with other poems to her, were published with "The Idea of Christian Love," by Mr. Edward Young of Salisbury. *Term Catalogues.* (Mich. 1688.)

[2] *A Sermon at the Funeral of the late learned and ingenuous Mrs. Ann Baynard, Daughter and only Child of Dr. Edward Baynard, Fellow of the College of Physitians, Together with some remarkable passages of her life, preached at the Parish Church of Barn(e)s in Surrey, June 6, 1697. By John Prude, A.M., Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of Norfolk; and Curate of St. Clement's Danes. Term Catalogues.* (Trin. 1697.)

faction along with them, these things she was not only conversant in, but mistress of, and that to such a degree, that very few of her sex did ever arrive at. She had from her infancy been trained up in the knowledge of these things, and had made a great progress therein; and even in her green years, at the age of 23, was arrived to the knowledge of a bearded philosopher.[1]

She was a "nervous and subtle disputant" in the "hard and knotty arguments of metaphysical learning." She was always coveting more knowledge, saying that it was a sin to be contented with but a little. She was exceedingly religious and learning was to her but a handmaid of piety. Her last words were a recommendation to women to study philosophy and the great book of nature which would give them a sound basis for wisdom in practical life. Women, she said, are capable of such study, and could accomplish much if they would "spend of that time in study and thinking, which they do in visits, vanity and folly." Mr. Collier, in the *Great Historical Dictionary*, says of her that it is doubtful whether the first Ralph Baynard, who for his conduct at the battle of Hastings was rewarded with eighty-five lordships, did more honor to the name of Baynard or the last Anne.

Mrs. Alicia D'Anvers (fl. 1691)

Academia : or the Humours of the University of Oxford in burlesque verse is a thin quarto by Mrs. Alicia D'Anvers. It was printed in May, 1691, and again with a fuller descriptive title in June of the same year. The poem is an account given to his fellow-servants by John who has recently visited Oxford. Mrs. d'Anvers puts herself in John's place. She uses his crude and even rough language, she gives his point of view, and relishes the misconceptions due to his ignorance. Heavy and clumsy as the poem is there is something refreshing and original in its tone. As an attempted realistic portrayal of a servant's experiences it stands quite by itself, except in comedies, in the decades before the novel widened human interests. Mrs. D'Anvers is

[1] *Biog. Fem.*, p. 42.

neither patronizing nor didactic. She simply finds genuine humor and entertainment in the comic juxtaposition of John's mind and the ancient customs and glories of Oxford.

Lady Chudleigh (1656-1710)

Lady Chudleigh [1] was a lady of much repute in the eighteenth century for her writings in both prose and verse. Her *Poems* were published in 1703 and her *Essays* in 1710, but her chief literary activities belong in the late seventeenth century. Her *Essays* are disquisitions on Pride, Humility, Self-love, Friendship, Death, Anger, Avarice, Solitude, and kindred themes. Mr. Ballard says of them: "They appear to be, not the excursions of a lively imagination . . . so much as the deliberate results of a long exercise in the world, improv'd with reading, regulated with judgment; softened by good breeding, and heightened with sprightly thoughts and elevated piety." Her prose style is fluent, energetic, and, for the most part, correct. In her Preface to her *Song of Three Children Paraphrased* she makes several points that indicate mental independence. In the height of the dominance of the heroic couplet she chooses Pindaric verse because she does not wish to be tied up to the rules of the couplet, and because she desires to give her fancy greater scope. She begs pardon for introducing into her poem ideas "not generally received," such as Dr. Burnet's conception of the "Ante-diluvian Earth as Smooth, regular, and uniform; without Mountains or Hills." Concerning her poetic use of the doctrine of preëxistence she says, "To me 't is indifferent which is true, as long as I know I am by the Laws of Poetry allow'd the Liberty of chusing that which will sound most gracefully in Verse." In regard to the stars she adopts "the Cartesian Hypothesis" because it makes the universe "appear infinitely larger, fuller, more magnificent." Her imagination is as genuinely excited as was Tennyson's by her conception of the "boundless Spaces" of the heavens and the splendor of the "huge Globes which roll over our Heads." She believes also

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. III, pp. 177–86.

in a millennial existence on "a new habitable earth." The poem itself is an unbroken ecstasy ninety long stanzas in duration, and becomes undeniably wearisome. But the woman who could spend months in a lonely country place absorbed in such religious and scientific reflections, who could maintain for so long a time so rapt and energetic a mental attitude towards abstract subjects, was far enough removed from the traditional *hausfrau.*

Though Lady Chudleigh rejoices in these learned topics she modestly disclaims any accurate knowledge. "But 't is not reasonable to expect that a Woman should be nicely skill'd in Physics: We are kept Strangers to all ingenious and useful Studies, and can have but a slight and superficial Knowledge of things." Two poems, *Resolution* and *To Mr. Dryden on his excellent Translation of Virgil,* give evidence of Lady Chudleigh's wide reading in poetry, history, drama, and divinity. Her literary dicta are of little value, for they do hardly more than echo the judgments of the day. According to her it was the poet Waller who, coming after the "transient Glimm'rings of Chaucer" and the "Lunar Beams of Spenser," announced the dawn of a new Morn, and with Dryden came "The Triumphs of refulgent Day." Taken as a whole the poems bitterly inveigh against life with its blighting sorrows, its fleeting, unreal joys, its injustice, its black despairs. The only break in the gloom comes in short periods of absorption in books, or in occasional religious ecstasies.

The first poem by which Lady Chudleigh became known is *The Ladies' Defence:* a sudden, angry outburst caused by a sermon on *Conjugal Duty* by a Mr. Sprint, a nonconformist in Sherbourn, Dorsetshire.[1] The personal animus in a little

[1] Mr. Sprint's sermon was printed under the title *The Bride-Woman's Counsellor. Being a Sermon Preach'd at a Wedding, May the Eleventh, 1699 at Sherbourne in Dorsetshire.* It was from 1 Cor. VII, 34, "But she that is Married careth for the things of the World, how she may please her Husband." He explains that "Man was all Affibility and Sweetness of Temper" before the Fall, the chief responsibility for which was properly placed on Eve and her female descendants. God had also fully indicated her function when he

poem *To the Ladies* warning them against marriage, apparently grew out of her own matrimonial infelicities. And *The Ladies' Defence* has the same ring of indignant sincerity. The poem is in the form of a conversation between the parson who preached the sermon; Sir William Loveall, who, out of the ignorance of his unmarried state, endeavors to reconcile the warring parties; Marissa, Lady Chudleigh herself; and Sir John Brute, who thanks the parson for preaching against "those Terrors of our Lives, those worst of Plagues, those Furies call'd our Wives." The parson replies:

> Not led by Passion, but by Zeal inspir'd,
> I've told the Women what's of them requir'd:
> Taught them their Husbands to Obey and Please,
> And to their Humours sacrifice their Ease:
> Give up their Reason, and their Wills resign,
> And ev'ry look, and ev'ry thought confine.
> Sure, this Detraction you can't justly call?
> 'T is kindly meant, and 't is address'd to All.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> If you wou'd live as it becomes a Wife,
> And raise the Honour of a marry'd Life,
> You must the useful Art of wheedling try,
> And with his various Humours still comply;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Whate'er he is, you still must think him best,
> And boast to all that you are truly blest;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Also, to him you inward Reverence owe;
> If he's a Fool, you must not think him so;

deliberately created her for the Profit and Comfort of Man. "A good wife," continues Mr. Sprint, "should be like a Mirrour which hath no Image of its own, but receives its Stamp and Image from the Face that looks into it: So should a good Wife endeavour to frame her outward Deportment, and her inward Affections according to her Husband's." She must not only obey his commands but she must bring "under unto him the very Desires of the Heart to be regulated by him so far, that it should not be lawful for her to will or desire what she herself liked, but only what her husband should approve and allow." Mr. Sprint printed his sermon only because of attacks by some "ill-natur'd Females." He gets his revenge by saying that he has not met among all his accusers one woman "whose Husband is able to give her the Character of a dutiful and obedient Wife."

Nor yet indulge one mean contemptuous Thought,
Or fancy he can e'er commit a Fault.
Nor must your Deference be alone confin'd
Unto the hid Recesses of your Mind,
But must in all your Actions be display'd,
And visible to each Spectator made.[1]

After this sarcastic summary of Mr. Sprint's irritating sermon Lady Chudleigh in the person of Marissa, depicts the general condition of women and her own loftier ambitions:

'T is hard we should be by the Men despis'd
Yet kept from knowing what would make us priz'd.
Debarr'd from Knowledge, banish'd from the Schools,
And with the utmost Industry bred Fools.
Laugh'd out of Reason, jested out of Sense,
And nothing left but Native Innocence:
. . . . . .
Or that my Sex would all such Toys despise;
And only study to be Good, and Wise:
. . . . . .
Instead of Novels, Histories peruse,
And for their Guides the wise Ancients chuse,
Thro' all the Labyrinths of Learning go,
And grow more humble as they more do know.
. . . . . .
Beauty's a Trifle merits not my Care.
I'd rather Œsop's ugly Visage wear,
Joyn'd with his Mind, than be a Fool, and Fair.
. . . . . .

[1] Lady Chudleigh's summary of the arts of a successful wife is exemplified in a serious book published anonymously entitled *The Fair Counsellor, or, The Young Lady's Conduct after Marriage.* Charlotte is instructing Olivia in "The Art of Management." A woman must recognize that she is confined to her husband for life and hence she should make it her business to please. She should learn to reflect his moods as in a glass. To all wayward humors she should oppose passive obedience and non-resistance. If he should come home intoxicated she should "by all the little innocent Arts of Love and fond Endearments decoy him to his Bed." An illustrative example of what may be done by gentleness and submission is the experience of Sir Toby Testy and his wife. Sir Toby became so warm with anger one day as to cane my Lady. She retired in tears to her own room, explaining to him later that it seemed better to her to bemoan her fate in silence than to expose his unkindness to a censorious world. The outcome was that he clasped her in his arms with a thousand endearing protestations, and never disobliged her again to his dying day.

But spite of you, we'll to ourselves be kind:
Your censures slight, your little Tricks despise,
And make it our whole business to be wise.
The mean low trivial Cares of Life disdain,
And read and Think, and Think and read again,
And on our Minds bestow the utmost Pain.

Anne Kingsmill, Lady Winchilsea (1661-1720)

One of the important women of letters in the late seventeenth century was Anne Kingsmill.[1] Of her early life we have no definite details. That it was a gay and happy life may be inferred from one of her retrospective poems in which she says that in her youth "Pleasure's tempting Air" blew soft about her, and that she dedicated her "Prime" to "vain Amusements." Later she coveted a place at court which to her ambitious eye seemed "Paradice below." At what time this desire was realized we have no record, but in 1683 we find her listed as one of the maids of honor to Mary of Modena. Miss Strickland says that Anne Killigrew and Anne Kingsmill were "ladies of irreproachable virtue, members of the Church of England, and alike distinguished for moral worth and literary achievements," and she adds that Anne Kingsmill was "well-known as the beautiful and witty maid of honour." In 1684 Anne married Mr. Finch, gentleman of the bedchamber to the Duke of York. At the coming of William and Mary, Mr. and Mrs. Finch went to the family place at Eastwell Park where they spent the rest of their uneventful lives in a retirement, embittered at first, doubtless, by their grief over Stuart disasters, but, as the years passed, rendered more and more delightful by the joys of country life, of books, and of friends. Mrs. Finch's best poems are those inspired by Eastwell and its associations. The Elizabethan house at Eastwell was set in a park of old yew trees and majestic beeches, forming "the very ideal of an ancestral park of the ancient noblesse," and it was by the extraordinary dignity and beauty of this park that Mrs. Finch's most imaginative work was inspired. Within doors the gathering of

[1] Winchilsea, Lady: *Poems* (ed. Reynolds, Myra); "A Fragment."

antiquities, the illuminating of books, the formation of a great library, and free literary productivity were the family interests. There were also many and close ties of friendship founded on natural causes of union such as loyalty to the Stuarts, devotion to the Church of England, high and even austere ideals of life. And family ties and ties of friendship received ardent acknowledgment. No woman of this period was more happily circumstanced in her home for the unhampered pursuit of literary tastes than was Lady Winchilsea. She began to write when she was a maid of honor, but it was with a nervous sense of the ridicule that would probably follow any disclosure of that fact. But at Eastwell the case was different. There are charming pictures of evening sessions when the authoress presented her work to an enthusiastic circle. A scribe entered her writings in a fair and clerkly hand in a majestic folio. With such encouragement the lady kept sedulously and joyfully to her task. And when her husband's accession to the title gave her a new position of dignity and authority she even ventured, in 1713,[1]

[1] That Lady Winchilsea's work was pretty well known before 1713 is evident from an interesting passage in Mrs. Manley's *The New Atalantis* (1709). Some invisible spectators are being taken about under the guidance of "Intelligence." They are observing the daily parade of coaches on the "Prado" when Intelligence calls attention to a lady in one of the coaches. "The Lady," he says, "once belonged to the Court, but marrying into the Country, she made it her Business to devote herself to the Muses, and has writ a great many pretty Things: These Verses of the Progress of Life, have met with abundance of applause, and therefore I recommend them to your Excellency's Perusal." *The Progress of Life* is then quoted entire and Astræa comments: "The Lady speaks very feelingly: We need look no further than this, to know that she's herself past that agreeable Age she so much regrets. However, I am very well pleas'd with the Thought that runs thro'; if she had contracted something of the second and third stanza, it had not been the Worse. I presume she's one of the Few that write out of Pleasure, and not Necessity. By that means its her own Fault, if she publish any Thing but what's Good; for it's next to impossible to write much and write well." (Vol. I, p. 186.) In the *Key* the "Lady" thus spoken of is said to be "Col. Finch's Lady once a Maid of Honour." Mrs. Manley's version of *The Progress of Life* shows several slight verbal variations from the form published in 1713. Two lines on Parnassus in the second stanza appeared in 1713 as more orthodox lines on Canaan. But when Miss Seward's mother taught her the poem in 1763, it was the old and not the 1713 version that she used. (Winchilsea, Lady: *Works*, ed. Reynolds, p. lxxiii.)

to publish a selection from her verse, first under the pseudonym "Ardelia," and then, in a later impression, with her full name and title.

Lady Winchilsea's poems were composed between 1683 and 1720, and during this period she tried nearly all poetic forms. Songs, satires, fables, tragedies, translations, are fully represented. She was the most voluminous of the minor poets of her time, and in vigor and scope she outranks most of them. But her literary importance to-day rests not so much on the amount or variety of her work, as on the fact that in an age of didacticism and satire she delicately foreshadowed tastes that ruled in the romanticism of a century later. It was her *Nocturnal Reverie*, with its minute accuracy of observation, its sense of the mystery of nature and of the mystic union between man and nature, that secured Wordsworth's praise, gave her an honorable place in Ward's *English Poets*, and finally established her in the heaven of literary fame as, in Mr. Gosse's phrase, "a minor excelsitude."

In the present study quite other points are to be made concerning Lady Winchilsea. She is particularly interesting when considered as a heretic against certain prevailing social and educational ideals. In the gay dissipations of court life under Charles II she maintained a conception of life serious and even austere. In close association with Mary of Modena and James II she yet maintained her devotion to the Church of England. With the world of fashion flocking to the comedies of the Restoration dramatists she yet condemned the immoralities of the stage with the bitterness of a Jeremy Collier. There was, then, in Lady Winchilsea an independence of judgment, a stoutness of fiber in forming and defending her own views, which would lead one to expect some trenchant remarks on the contemporary attitude towards women. It is much to be regretted that the letters of Lady Winchilsea, if any are extant, have never been published. Her interests were so varied, her friendships so ardent, her hours of country leisure so numerous, her pen so facile, that she must have found, in what Anne Seward called

"epistolary solicitudes," one of the most convenient outlets for a spirit often kicking against the pricks of social conventions, and her keenness of insight, her caustic phrasing, would make her letters worth many pages of pindarics. But in default of such letters we turn to the one prose essay and to the poems. From scattered passages we can build up the elements of her heresies. Though she loved her home and was the most devoted of wives, she utterly rejected the *hausfrau* theory of life. She declared that she, at least, was never meant for "the dull manage of a servile house." She asked little of her table except that it should be "set without her care." Rich food and elaborate service could be dispensed with, but leisure and a free mind she must have. The frivolous occupations of the town lady, the endless discussions of laces and brocades, the rivalries as to dishes and screens from China, the gossip and ill-natured jests at fashionable tea-tables, she found unendurable. Feminine accomplishments, such as embroidery, amateurish drawing and painting, awakened her active hostility.

This definite rejection of all that ordinarily filled the feminine mind, and a rejection, moreover, in the interests of books and writing, of course made Ardelia the unhappy victim of many a sneer. The attack on her by Pope and Gay, in *Three Hours after Marriage*, in 1717, may be taken as an extreme example of the indignities to which "a petticoat author" might be subjected, but there must have been many lesser evidences of social disapproval or the irritating theme would not so often recur in her poems. In "The Introduction" she says:

> Alas! a woman that attempts the pen,
> Such an intruder on the rights of men,
> Such a presumptuous Creature, is esteem'd,
> The fault, can by no vertue be redeem'd.
> They tell us, we mistake our sex and way;
> Good breeding, fassion, dancing, dressing, play
> Are the accomplishments we should desire;
> To write, or read, or think, or to enquire
> Would cloud our beauty, and exhaust our time,
> And interrupt the Conquests of our prime.

She congratulates herself that she had at least had the good sense to keep her rhymes a secret while at court, where a "Versifying Maid of Honour" would have been looked upon "with prejudice, if not with contempt." During a visit to London she heard the young gossip Almeria describe a certain lady as "A Poetess! a woman who writes! A common jest!" Conscious of her growing folio at Eastwell, Ardelia resented the implied censure. What law, she asks, forbids women to think? Women, she protests, are "Education's and not Nature's fools." Ardelia had high praise from noted contemporaries and cordial appreciation at home. But these did not avail to conquer her morbid sensitiveness to criticism. She seemed to embody in herself two warring tendencies, a demand for complete intellectual freedom and the author's inevitable desire to spread his wares abroad, with the shrinking modesty of the lady to whom any sort of publicity was hateful.

The "Matchless Orinda," Lady Winchilsea tells us, was the model on whom, from her early girlhood she formed herself. The first verses she wrote were in honor of Orinda. By Orinda's example she justified the efforts and aims of her own muse, but she is in no sense a copyist. It was Orinda's fame as a noted and virtuous woman poet that inspired her rather than any close study of Orinda's work. Lady Winchilsea, in that small portion of her work on which her fame rests, is very delicately and truly original. Her spirit reacted against court life as definitely as did Anne Killigrew's, but she found no satisfaction in satiric comment. She shrank from any sort of contest. She argued and protested only when pushed to the wall. She was shy and easily intimidated, and her best work does not come from the heat of conflict or from bitterness of spirit. She is essentially contemplative. The poems on which her fame rests blossomed out quietly, exquisitely, under the gentle stimulus of a happy home life in the midst of lovely natural surroundings. She is typically a lady of letters because, without the spur of necessity, urged on by no popular applause, she yet, for more than thirty years, made the reading

of books and the writing of books the central occupation of her life.

The honorable Mrs. Monck[1] was the daughter of Lord Molesworth, a nobleman of Ireland. Mr. Ballard says of her learning: "She, purely by force of her own natural genius, acquired a perfect knowledge of the Latin, Italian and Spanish tongues: and by a constant reading of the finest authors in those languages, became so great a mistress of the art of poetry, that she wrote many poems for her own diversion." In 1716, after her death, Lord Molesworth published her poems under the title *Marinda. Poems and Translations on Several Occasions.* In his dedication to Caroline, the Princess of Wales, he says that the book represents the works of the leisure hours of a young gentlewoman in a remote country solitude, with no assistance but that of a good library, and with the daily care of a large family on her hands. In commending her character he says, "I loved her more *because she deserved it, than because she was mine.*" Various slight poems show Marinda's knowledge of Italian and Spanish. Better than all these are two cleverly turned epigrams on "a lady of pleasure," and some affecting farewell lines written in her last sickness to her husband. Mrs. Monck's repute for learning comes largely by hearsay, her printed memorials are slight and unimportant, but she nevertheless gives an impression, elusive but real, of a most interesting personality.

The Honorable Mrs. Monck (d. 1715)

Lady Giffard was Sir William Temple's sister. She was twelve years younger than Dorothy. After her marriage and almost immediate widowhood, in 1661, she made her home with the Temples. Her *Life and Correspondence* has been published by Mrs. Longe as a sequel to the *Letters of Dorothy Osborne.* The volume contains letters from Lady Chesterfield, from Lady Sunderland

Martha, Lady Giffard (1639-1722)

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets,* vol. III, pp. 201–03.

("Saccharissa"), and others, to Lady Giffard. The letters by Lady Giffard are few in number and are all written to her niece Lady Berkeley, later Lady Portland, and belong in the years 1697–1722. These letters have none of the sparkle and humor and literary charm of Dorothy's. But we get indications that Lady Giffard was a woman of intellectual interests. We find her reading Turkish history daytimes with recourse to Virgil, "as less exacting," for evenings. She knew Spanish and French, and one of the specific items in her will is a bequest of the books she had collected in these two languages.

Sarah Byng, Mrs. Osborne (1693-1775)

A third series of letters, published under the title *Political and Social Letters of a Lady of the Eighteenth Century*, though belonging later in the century, may be brought in here because they carry on the series of Osborne letters. Sarah Byng, the daughter of Admiral Byng, Viscount Torrington, married, in 1710, John Osborne of Chicksands Priory, the old home of Dorothy and the place from which she wrote most of her letters. Mr. John Osborne was Dorothy's grand-nephew. He died in 1719 and his father in 1720, leaving to Sarah Osborne an infant son, Danvers, the heir to the title and a heavily burdened estate. Her letters fall in several series, the first set from 1721 to 1739 being to her brother George on business matters concerning the property. Most interesting are the letters to Danvers from 1733 to 1751. When he came of age in 1736 she was able to turn over to him an unincumbered estate, and on his marriage in 1740 she superintended the establishment of the new household at Chicksands. A third set of letters has to do with the sentence and execution of her brother Admiral Byng, in 1757. Through the death of the wife of Danvers in 1743 and the death of Danvers in 1750 Mrs. Osborne was left with two grandsons to bring up, and her last letters are to John, one of these grandsons, who was traveling in Holland.

Through two generations Mrs. Osborne bore heavy administrative and financial burdens. She was both father and mother

to her son, and then to her grandsons. And she was left single-handed to conduct the defense of her brother Admiral Byng. It is not strange that the letters are frequently hurried and harassed in tone. She is constantly vexed and baffled because, as a woman, she cannot conduct affairs directly. Some man must be her intermediary. She lays plans, foresees difficulties, writes explicit directions, and then she must urge and cajole her representative to due interest and prompt action. The especial interest in her letters is their abundant and exact account of social life and especially of domestic economy. Energetic, courageous, resourceful, keenly observant, and with a clear head for business, Mrs. Osborne shows herself to be. Perhaps if we had her letters before the burdens of life fell so heavily upon her we might find some hint of the charm in Dorothy's letters, for even Dorothy's letters after marriage became "tame and flat to what was before." As it is, Mrs. Osborne's letters are valuable for scattered social detail, not for any permanent charm of expression.

Elizabeth Singer, Mrs. Rowe (1674-1737)

Mr. Walter Singer, a dissenting minister of Frome, was early left a widower with three daughters. Two of these daughters showed while still young exceptionally good minds and a natural interest in study. One daughter, who died at nineteen, was devoted to medicine and collected books on that subject. Elizabeth preferred drawing and poetry. She began drawing when her fingers could hardly hold the pencil, and she squeezed out the juices of plants to make colors. Her father furnished her an excellent master, and she attained sufficient skill so that throughout her life her work was highly prized by her friends. She also loved music "to excess." But poetry was her chief delight. She began writing at twelve, and by the time she was twenty-two she had on hand a store of verse so pleasing to her friends that they insisted on its publication, and there accordingly appeared a thin little volume in 1696 under the title *Poems on Several Occasions. Written by Philomela.* The

"Preface to the Reader," by one Elizabeth Johnson, is another of many contemporary indications of feminine irritation at the limitations imposed upon them. Miss Johnson allows "Mankind the *Brutal Advantages of Strength*," but when they "wou'd Monopolize *Sence* too, when neither that, nor Learning, nor so much as *Wit*" is granted the women, they are forced to protest against such "*notorious* Violations on the *Liberties of Free-born English Women.*" "This makes the *Meekest Worm* amongst us all, ready to turn agen when we are thus *trampled* on; But alas! What can we do to *Right* our selves? *stingless* and *harmless* as we are, we can only *Kiss* the *Foot* that *hurts* us." But it sometimes pleases Heaven to succor a distressed people by sending them some bright genius, "an Epaminondas, a Timoleon, a Nassaw." "Nor is our *Defenceless Sex* forgotten — we have not only *Banduca's* and *Zenobia's*, *but Sappho's*, and *Behn's*, and *Schurman's*, and *Orinda's*, who have *humbled* the most haughty of our Antagonists, and made 'em do Homage to our *Wit*, as well as our *Beauty*." Miss Singer's consent to the publication of this volume was gained only by a promise of strict anonymity, and the "Philomela," then chosen as a pen-name through a naïve adaptation of "Singer," became her permanent appellation.

One interesting fact with regard to these early poems is the indication we have of a kind of poetical commerce maintained among the members of a group of persons similarly inclined to verse. Philomela writes a *Pindarick Poem on Habbakuk* which she sends to "The Athenians" and they respond with a poem beginning,

> We yield! we yield! the Palm, bright Maid! be thine!

She sends a *Poetical Question* to the Athenians and gets a long answer. *The Vanity of the World* and *The Wish* are likewise addressed to the Athenians and have similar responses. In a *Pindarick to the Athenian Society* she brings as "*Zealous Tribute*," "The early products of a Female muse," praising especially their piety and heroic sentiments and the courage with which they have lashed the darling vices of the times.

A friendship so exalted and immense,
A *female breast* did ne'er before commence.

A little poem in humorous vein, *To one that persuades me to leave the Muses*, gives some account of her school-days. "I fairly bid the Boarding Schools farewell," "Old Governess farewell with all my heart," are lines indicative of her attitude.

Spite of her heart, *Old Puss* shall damn no more
Great *Sedley's* Plays, and never look 'em o're;
Affront my *Novels*, no, nor in a Rage,
Force *Dryden's* lofty Products from the Stage,
Whilst all the rest of the *melodious crew*,
With the *whole* System of *Athenians* too,
For Study's sake out of the Window flew.
But I, to Church, shall fill her Train no more,
And walk as if I sojurn'd by the hour.

In like vein she bids adieu to "dancing days," singing lessons, Japan work, and even her "esteemed Pencil," and vows to give herself to poetry. And true it is that the rest of her life is mainly of literary and pious significance. When young her beauty and charm had resulted in "a train of lovers," but no one of them, not even Mr. Prior, the poet, could lure her from her serene solitude — possibly because she was "destined by heaven for the possession of another gentleman." At any rate, she went smoothly on with her chosen literary life till she was thirty-six, when she married Mr. Thomas Rowe, thirteen years younger than herself, but of like tastes and himself an author. Their extraordinarily happy life together was brought to a close by his death in 1715, and, after this five years of happiness, she spent the twenty-seven years of her widowhood in a stricter solitude, a more absorbed religious communion, a completer devotion to literary pursuits, than before her marriage. Her essays, her poems, her letters, were the events of her life. She had early come to know the family of Lord Weymouth at Longleate. Mr. Thynne had taught her French and Italian; various members of the family and various family events were celebrated in her verse. She was on most intimate terms with the

Countess of Hertford and corresponded with her for many years. Over a hundred of her letters to the Countess were published in *The Works of Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe and Mr. Thomas Rowe*, and though they make dull and monotonous reading now were highly esteemed at the time. In fact, the modest and anonymous Philomela had great eighteenth-century vogue. She had the friendship of many in the great world, she was abundantly praised by poets and divines, and her works went through numerous editions. Her husband said that she combined the fire and passion of Aphra Behn with the chaste purity of Mrs. Katherine Philips. But Astræa's passion underwent some strange alchemy when it was transmuted into Philomela's religious ecstasy. Orinda's purity was fatal to the combination. Yet Mrs. Rowe's "divine transports" have — Mr. Watts admits it — sometimes a soft and passionate sound, even an amorous note, capable of misinterpretation, but evidently reminiscent of the *Songs of Solomon*, beloved of her youth. It was not an age for enthusiasms and ecstasies. That her "flights" were so popular may possibly be explained by the fact that through them all she was curiously prosaic and intellectually commonplace.

Mrs. Bland (1660?-1765?)

Mr. Ballard speaks of "Mrs. Bland,[1] a Yorkshire gentlewoman so well skilled in Hebrew that she taught it to her son and daughter." Mrs. Bland was born about 1660 and married Mr. Nathaniel Bland in 1681. Her instructor in Hebrew was Lord Van Helmont from whom she learned to write the language with great exactness. At the request of Mr. Thoresby she wrote a Phylactery in Hebrew and presented it to the Royal Society, where it was preserved among their curiosities. Mr. Bland became Lord of the Manor at Beeston and Mr. Thoresby visited him there. To the astonishment of the guest Martha Bland, the young daughter of the house, was translating He-

[1] Thoresby: *Diary*, May 13, 1709; May 1, 1713; April 22, 1716; Sept. 2, 1716.

brew into English, having been taught by "that ingenious gentlewoman," her mother. Four years later Mr. Thoresby took his son Ralph to see "Mrs. Bland, the Hebrician." She had also studied Anglo-Saxon, for she borrowed Elizabeth Elstob's book from Mr. Thoresby and kept it long enough to copy out the grammar part.

Miss Jane Barker (fl. 1688-1723)

Miss Jane Barker is a literary lady whose productions belong in two epochs. Her collected poems appeared in 1688 under the title *Poetical Recreations: Consisting of Original Poems, Songs, Odes, etc. With Several New Translations. In Two Parts, Part I. Occasionally Written by Mrs. Jane Barker. Part II. By Several Gentlemen of the Universities, and Others.* Twenty-seven years after the publication of this verse Miss Barker again came before the public, this time as a writer of romances which proved very popular. They were collected under the title *The Entertaining Novels of Mrs. Jane Barker*, and a second edition had appeared by 1719. In 1723 she brought out *A Patch-Work Screen for the Ladies; or Love and Virtue Recommended: In a Collection of Instructive Novels. Related after a Manner intirely New, and interspersed with Rural Poems, describing the Innocence of a Country Life. By Mrs. Jane Barker, of Wilsthorp, near Stamford, in Lincolnshire.*[1]

The long silence between the verse of 1688 and the romances of 1715–26 is unbroken by any explanatory hint or reference. Yet Miss Barker had but one story to tell and that was told in her youth. In her novels she uses the characters, events, and emotions recorded in her early verse. Under the form of a sustained narration, with the addition of much in the way of romantic adventure, they make more entertaining reading, but offer no essentially new elements. The fifth novel, *Clodius and Scipiana*, is perhaps but an enlargement of a romance

[1] The most complete account of Miss Barker is in an inaugural dissertation by Karl Stanglmaier, Berlin, 1906, entitled *Mrs. Jane Barker. Ein Beitrag zur Englischen Literaturgeschichte.*

entitled *Scipina*, which had been published and concerning which she had received several congratulatory poems, before 1688.[1]

One persistent element in Miss Barker's verse and prose is autobiographic reference. Especially is this true of the poems, *The Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* and *A Patch-Work Screen*. From these sources various facts emerge concerning Miss Barker's life and personality.

She says that she was sent at first to the "Putney School," but that she was taken home at about ten by her mother who had come to consider such schools as "Academies of Vanity and Expense, no Way instructive in the Rudiments of a Country Gentlewoman's Life." At fifteen she was sent to London under the care of an aunt to learn "Town Politeness." [2] Her father lived near Cambridge,[3] and through her brother, a Cambridge man, she was well known in the younger literary set at the University. The praise accorded her verse was excessive. "Philaster" of St. John's hails her as the true heiress of the great Orinda. To "C. G." she is the Elijah for whose mantle meaner poets wait. "Exilius," also of St. John's, celebrates the miracles of her Almighty Pen. "S. C." wonders to see men "tug at Classic Oars" and "sweat over Horace" when along comes a lady who without effort utters "well-shapt Fancy and true Digested Thought." "Fidelius" rejoices to see "Physick

[1] "To Mrs. Jane Barker on her most Delightful and Excellent Romance of Scipina, now in the Press."

"To my Ingenius Friend Mrs. Jane Barker, on my Publishing her Romance of Scipina."

Both of these poems are in Part II of *Poetical Recreations* (1688). The second one is by Benjamin Crayle.

[2] *Amours of Bosvil and Galesia*, pp. 3–4.

[3] In the second edition of the *Entertaining Novels* (1719), in a dedication to the Countess of Exeter, Miss Barker says, "Was it not Burleigh House with its Park, &c., that formed in me the first idea of my Scipio's country retreat? Most sure it was, for when I composed my Romance I knew nothing further from home than Burleigh and Warthorp." These two seats of the Exeter family are about seven miles from Wilsthorp. (*Notes and Queries*, Series IX, no. 10, p. 171.) Miss Baker lived at Wilsthorp which is near Stamford and only about forty miles from Cambridge.

and Anatomie done into purest Verse." And "J. N.," Fellow of St. John's, praises her Scipina as writ in lines,

> More than Astrea's soft, more than Orinda's Chaste.

Another gentleman from St. John's said that she surpassed "the Scaroons and Scudderies of France" and showed that England could originate as well as translate.[1] Miss Barker was evidently in the stimulating and unusual position of being the temporary literary idol of an academic coterie.

There was a false lover in Miss Barker's early life who, as "Strephon" in verse [2] and as "Bosvil" in prose,[3] is copiously written up along with her own emotional experiences as "Galesia." The most interesting portion of the affair has to do with Galesia's original ways of reëstablishing her happiness. She found comfort in contemplating the wonderful works of Creation.[4] She wandered along shady paths, by little streams, and through the meadows. She loved the early morning, the evening dews, the starry night sky. There is no felicitous phrasing in the references to nature, but the fact remains that Galesia found in nature a satisfaction and sometimes an exaltation quite foreign to the heroines of her time.

Galesia's second resource is study. She says of this new occupation:

> Finding myself abandon'd by *Bosvil* and thinking it impossible ever to love any Mortal more, resolv'd to espouse a Book, and spend my Days in Study . . . I imagin'd my self the *Orinda* or *Sapho* of my Time. In order to this, I got my brother, who was not yet return'd to Oxford,[5] to set me in the way to learn my Grammar, which he really did, thinking it . . . a Freak without Foundation to be overthrown by the first Difficulty I shou'd meet with in the Syntax, knowing it to be less easy to make Substantive and Adjective agree, than to place a Patch or Curl.[6]

Her indulgent brother, when he came back from his studies abroad, also taught her medicine. With him she went on long

[1] Barker, Jane: *Poems, passim.* [2] *Poems*: "To my Unkind Strephon."
[3] In *Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* and *A Patch-Work Screen.*
[4] *Amours*, p. 11.
[5] Mr. Barker studied at both Universities. [6] *Amours*, p. 13.

"simpling" excursions to gather flowers for the "large natural Herbal" they were making. With him she read "Bartholine, Walæus, Harvey, his Circulatio Sanguinis, and Lower's Motion of the Heart." [1] She learned to write prescriptions, or "bills" as she called them, in Latin, with the same "Cyphers and Directions as Doctors do," so that even the apothecaries were misled and filled her "bills" with those of the regular physicians.[2] She also ventured on something in the way of practice and gained some repute for curing cases of gout given up by the doctors.[3] She began to abandon the Muses for Paracelsus. Or if she wrote poems the processes of digestion and the circulation of the blood were her themes.[4] If the shackles of rhyme hindered scientific accuracy of statement, she squared herself with facts by abundant footnotes in which the proper Latin terminology was given full scope. Her interest in medicine was a vital one. She even thanks Strephon, through whose falsity she had been driven to study, and had so gained a joy beyond "the sottish ease" that waits on love. In her new love of learning she even took a vow of virginity:

> In this happy life let me remain,
> Fearless of twenty-five and all its train
> Of slights or scorns, or being call'd Old Maid,
> Those Goblings which so many have betray'd.[5]

Somewhat later Galesia gained a complete victory over her lovelorn self by a most original and sensible method. She took entire charge of her father's farm. She planned the work, hired the laborers, superintended in person the occupations of each day, paid the wages, and kept the accounts. The wholesome interests of each day and equally wholesome fatigue at night left no intervals in which to regret her lost lover.[6]

Galesia's recourse to hard study and responsible farm management as a cure for a wounded heart sets her as a heroine in a

[1] *A Patch-Work Screen*, p. 10. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 56.
[3] *Poems*, "On the Apothecary's Filing my Bills amongst the Doctors."
[4] *Poems:* "A Farewell to Poetry with a Long Digression on Anatomy."
[5] *Poems:* "A Virgin Life." [6] *Amours*, pp. 44–46.

class by herself. She is so sensible and reasonable as to seem out of place in a romance. It is therefore something of a surprise to find her out-distancing the most sentimental in sighs and sobs and tears. Her utterance in recounting the baseness of Bosvil, "It is fitting that I should weep on all occasions," might serve as her permanent order of business. "My sighs alternately blew up my Tears and my Tears allay'd my Sighs" till "fresh Reflections rais'd new Gusts of Sorrow," describes her stormy woes. Sometimes she is able to restrain "the briny Ebullition," but usually "a new Flux of Tears" breaks down all barriers.

With the death of her brother the joy of Galesia's life went out. Books and medicine lost their charm. Without his inspiring presence all her occupations became insipid. Her view of learned women also changed. She says a learned woman is as ridiculous as a spinning Hercules; that books are as unfit for women as paint, washes, and patches are for a man; that a studious woman and an effeminate man may be classed together as out of their sphere. A learned woman is "like a Forc'd Plant that never has its due or proper Relish but is wither'd by the first Blast," or "like the Toad in the Fable, that affected to swell itself as big as the Ox," and burst in the enterprise.[1] This bitter view of learning comes only in the novels, and probably indicates some unhappy experiences on Miss Barker's part since the days when her muse was honored by the University wits.

Celia Fiennes

Celia Fiennes was the daughter of Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes and the sister of the third Viscount Saye and Sele. The one book by which she is known is *Through England on a Side Saddle in the Time of William and Mary, Being the Diary of Celia Fiennes*, first published in 1888 by the Honorable Mrs. Griffith, to whom the original manuscript was given by her father, the thirteenth Baron Saye and Sele. In her interesting "To the Reader" Miss Fiennes (fl. 1691–1703)

[1] *Amours*, p. 47.

explains that these journeys were undertaken that she might regain her health by "variety and change of aire and exercise"; that she picked up such information as came in her way because her mind could not remain totally unoccupied; and that she wrote down her observations merely for the pleasure of her near relations, the manuscript not being designed for more public use. She then proceeds to justify her travels:

Now thus much without vanity may be asserted of the subject, that if all persons, both Ladies, much more Gentlemen, would spend some of their tyme in Journeys to visit their native Land, and be curious to Inform themselves and make observations of the pleasant prospects, good buildings, different produces and manufactures of each place, with the variety of sports and recreations they are adapt to, would be a souveraign remedy to cure or preserve ffrom these Epidemick diseases of vapours, should I add Laziness? — it would also fform such an Idea of England, add much to its Glory and Esteem in our minds and cure the evil Itch of over-valueing fforeign parts; at least ffurnish them with an Equivalent to entertain strangers when amongst us, Or jnform them when abroad of their native Country, which has been often a Reproach to the English, ignorance and being strangers to themselves. Nay the Ladies might have matter not unworthy their observation, soe subject for conversation, within their own compass in each country to which they relate, and thence studdy now to be serviceable to their neighbours especially the poor among whome they dwell, which would spare them the uneasye thoughts how to pass away tedious dayes, and tyme would not be a burden when not at a card or dice table, and the ffashions and manners of fforeign parts less minded and desired. . . . But now I may be justly blamed to pretend to give acc: of our Constitution, Customs, Laws, Lect, matters farre above my Reach or capacity, but herein I have described what have come within my knowledge either by view and reading, or relation from others which according to my conception have faithfully Rehearsed, but where I have mistaken in any form or subject matter I easily submitt to a correction and will enter such Erratas in a supplement annext to y^e^ Book of some particulars since remark'd; and shall conclude with a hearty wish and recommendation to all, but Especially my own Sex, the studdy of those things which tends to Improve the mind and makes our Lives pleasant and comfortable as well as proffitable in all the Stages and Stations of our Lives, and render suffering and age supportable and Death less fformidable and a future State more happy.[1]

[1] Celia Fiennes: *Through England on a Side Saddle*, Introduction, pp. ix–xi.

Miss Fiennes's separate journeys are not dated, but we know that they began before 1691 because the earlier trips from her home at Newtontony in Wiltshire to Bath, to Oxfordshire, to "Salsebury," were taken with her mother, and her mother died in 1691. The description of the coronation of Queen Anne would indicate that the travels extended beyond 1703. "My Northern Journey in May 1697" was one of the most important of her travels. She thus records its close: "Thence to Highgate 6 miles, thence to London 4 miles where I returned and all our Company Blessed be God very well wthout any disaster or trouble in 7 weeks tyme about 635 miles that we went together." [1] Cambridge, Ely, Peterborough, Nottingham, Lincoln, Hull, and Scarborough, indicate their general route north. Encouraged by the success of this difficult trip, Miss Fiennes determined upon a still more hazardous enterprise. "My great Journey to Newcastle and to Cornwall" [2] records a remarkable achievement. She went north to Peterborough; then west to Chester; then north by way of Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, Kendall, Lake Windermere, Ambleside, Ulswater, Penrith, Carlisle, and so over into the edge of Scotland; then east to Newcastle; then southwest by Durham, Manchester, Worcester, Exeter, Plymouth, Land's End; and finally home to Newtontony.

Arthur Young is famous for his English tours, but his travels are nearly three quarters of a century later than those of Miss Fiennes.[3] Gray's notable visit to the Lakes was in 1769. In 1756–1766 Amory, in his *Life of John Buncle*, described the Lake Region, and as early as 1760 Dr. Brown wrote a letter praising the Lakes. But Celia Fiennes's visit and description belong at the very beginning of the century and confer upon her the honors belonging to the pioneer. Her book has also a distinctive interest of its own. I cannot forbear to quote her account of her journey through the Westmoreland Hills:

[1] Celia Fiennes: *Through England on a Side Saddle*, p. 99.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[3] Between 1667 and 1771.

Thence I Rode almost all the waye in sight of this great water [Windermere], some tymes I lost it by reason of y^e^ great hills interposeing and so a Continu'd up hill and down hill and that pretty steep, even when I was in that they Called bottoms w^ch^ are very rich good ground, and so I gained by degrees from Lower to higher hills w^ch^ I alwayes went up and down before I came to another hill. At last I attained to the side of one of these hills or ffells of Rocks, w^ch^ I passed on the side much about the Middle, for Looking down to the bottom it was at Least a Mile all full of those Lesser hills and jnclosures, so Looking upward I was as farre from the Top which was all Rocks, and something more barren tho there was some trees and wood growing in y^e^ Rocks and hanging over all down y^e^ Brow of some of the hills. From these great ffells there are severall springs out of y^e^ Rock that trickle down their sides, and as they meete with stones and Rocks in the way, when something obstructs their passage and so they Come with more violence, that gives a pleaseing sound and murmuring noise. . . . As I walked down at this place I was walled on both sides by those inaccessible high rocky barren hills w^ch^ hangs over ones head in some places and appears very terrible, and from them springs many Little Currents of water from the sides and Clefts, w^ch^ trickle down to some Lower part where it runs swiftly over the stones and shelves in the way, w^ch^ makes a pleasant Rush and murmuring noise.[1]

Wordsworth's "And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters," has here an interesting early statement. Of Ulswater, she says:

I rode the whole Length of this water by its side, sometyme a Little higher upon the side of the hill and sometyme just by the shore. . . . I observed the boundaries of all these great waters (which are a sort of deep Lakes or kind of standing waters) are these sort of Barren Rocky hill w^ch^ are so vastly high. I Call this a standing water because its not like other great Rivers as y^e^ Trent, Severne, Hull or Thames, etc. to appear to Run w^th^ a streame or Current but only as it Rowles from side to side Like waves as the wind moves it.[2]

As a rule scenery is but slightly touched upon. Miss Fiennes's interest was in roads, bridges, markets, dwellings and grounds, churches; in the quality and price of food, in dress, in pictures and furniture, in manners and customs; in pageantry,

[1] Celia Fiennes: *Through England on a Side Saddle*, p. 163.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 165.

processions, and ceremonials. Her description of the customs at Bath, of the funeral of Queen Mary, of the Lord Mayor's Day in London, may be taken as illustrative of her method of writing. Her manuscript was printed *verbatim*, and that was, indeed, the only course to pursue. Any attempt to correct or methodize, or modernize it, would result almost in rewriting it. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, a generation later, was a keen observer of affairs in Turkey, but Miss Fiennes surpasses her in fullness of detail. Nothing escapes her quick, accurate eye, her sharply retentive memory, and her unwearied pen. The facts crowd in upon each other with breathless haste. There is no such thing as grace or melody or beauty of style. There is hardly anything so tranquilizing as order and clearness. There is no time for any personal reactions on the things seen. There is only here and there a reflection, there are only the scantiest notes on people. But there is an astounding assemblage of external facts, undiscriminating, uninterpreted, unenlivened by a spark of emotion or imagination, but, in their total effect, genuinely impressive. What energy, what courage, what endurance, it required for a woman to make these unusual and very difficult journeys! And yet at first reading the dry, rapid, confused narrative is as uninspiring as a guidebook. It is only gradually that we become conscious of the burning enthusiasm that kept Miss Fiennes at her self-imposed task. She had the zeal of a devotee with the intellectual method of a chronicler or maker of inventories. But whatever may be the counts against her style, there can be no deductions from the high estimate of her book as a contribution to social history. And still more must it stand to her credit that not only no other woman, but no man of her day knew so much about England as did this earliest of the women travelers.

A lady who can in the strictest interpretation of the word be called learned is Elizabeth Elstob. For this reason and because she is very little known, I shall give as full an account as I have been able to obtain. In

Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756)

Ballard's *Collection of Original Letters*, in the Bodleian Library are several to him from Miss Elstob, and among them is the following brief memoir of her life, in her own handwriting, enclosed in a letter dated November 23, 1738:

Elizabeth Elstob, Daughter of Ralph and Jane Elstob,[1] was born in the Parish of St. Nicholas, in New Castle upon Tyne, September the twenty ninth, sixteen hundred and eighty-three. From her childhood she was a great lover of books, which being observed by her mother, who was also a great admirer of learning, especially in her own sex, there was nothing wanting for her improvement, so long as her mother lived. But being so unfortunate as to lose her when she was about eight years old, and when she had but just gone thro' her accidence and grammar, there was a stop put to her progress in learning for some years. For her brother being under age when her mother died, she was under the guardianship of a relation, who was no friend to women's learning, so that she was not suffered to proceed, notwithstanding her repeated requests that she might, being always put off with that common and vulgar saying that one tongue is enough for a woman. However, this discouragement did not prevent her earnest endeavours to improve her mind, in the best manner she was able, not only because she had a natural inclination to books herself, but in obedience to her excellent mother's desire. She therefore employed most of her time in reading such English and French books (which last language she with much difficulty obtained leave to learn) as she could meet with till she went to live with her brother, who very joy-

[1] In Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 139, is this statement: "From another of Miss Elstob's letters in the same collection [letters to Mr. Ballard] it appears that Dr. Hickes was her grandfather by the mother's side; a circumstance which may account for her proficiency, if not for the origin of her Saxon studies." I have not as yet found confirmation of this relationship. In the letters and dedications to him the brother and sister put forward no claim to relationship, and in the letter Dr. Hickes wrote in behalf of William Elstob and in those written in approbation of Miss Elstob's work, there is no indication that he was asking help for his grandchildren. The *Dictionary of National Biography* says that Dr. Hickes "left no children," a statement slightly ambiguous, for while it conveys the impression that he had no children, it might be literally true even if Jane Elstob were his daughter, for she died about twenty-four years before he did. Nichols in *Literary Anecdotes* speaks of an Elstob pedigree "accompanied by another pedigree of Mrs. Elstob's mother." These were on a single leaf fastened into Richard St. George's *Visitation of the County of Durham* (1615), among the MSS. of the Harleian Collection.

ELIZABETH ELSTOB

From a drawing by herself engraved in an initial for her translation of *The Pastoral of St. Gregory*, 1709, and used also in her *Grammar* in 1713

fully and readily assisted and encouraged her, in her studies, with whom she laboured very hard as long as she lived. In that time she translated and published an Essay on Glory, written in French by the celebrated Mademoiselle de Scudery, and published an English-Saxon Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory, with an English translation and Notes, etc. Also the Rudiments of Grammar for the English-Saxon Tongue. She designed, if ill fortune had not prevented her, to have published all Ælfrick's Homilies, of which she made an entire transcript, with the various readings from other manuscripts, and had translated several of them into English. She likewise took an exact copy of the Textus Roffensis upon vellum, now in the library of that great and generous encourager of learning, the Right Honourable the Earl of Oxford. And transcribed all the Hymns, from an ancient Manuscript belonging to the Church of Sarum. She had several other designs, but was unhappily hindered, by a necessity of getting her bread, which with much difficulty, labour, and ill health, she has endeavoured to do for many years, with very indifferent success. If it had not been that Almighty God was graciously pleased to raise her up lately some generous and good friends, she could not have subsisted, to whom she always was, and will, by the grace of God, be most faithful.[1]

The brother of whom Miss Elstob speaks was William Elstob, who was ten years older than she. At eleven he was sent to Eton. At sixteen he went to Cambridge, and later to Oxford, where he was finally, in 1696, elected fellow of University College. In 1702 he became rector of the united parishes of St. Swithin and St. Mary Bothaw, in London, where he died in 1715 at the age of forty-two. He was a highly trained linguist, a great lover of antiquities, and one of the most promising Anglo-Saxon scholars of his time. He apparently had liberal sentiments concerning the education of women, so that as soon as his sister came under his care all her desires for study were gratified. Just when she went to Oxford is not certain, but it was probably about the time he took his fellowship, when she was thirteen. She gives the date of her entrance upon her Anglo-Saxon studies as 1698, when she was fifteen. In that year her brother had made a transcript of King Alfred's version of

[1] Walker, John: *Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. I, pp. 243–46; Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, pp. 112–40, "The Elstobs."

the Latin historian Orosius which he designed to publish. She wished to understand it and says, "Having gained the Alphabet, I found it so easy, and in it so much the grounds of our present Language, and of a more particular Agreement with some Words which I had heard when very young in the *North*, as drew me to be more inquisitive after Books written in that Language." Her brother was well pleased and recommended the *Saxon Heptatuch*. From this she went on to other treatises, and finally began to divert herself with taking transcripts of such ancient manuscripts as she could find.[1] She proved to be particularly facile with her pen. The copies she made of the old manuscripts were said to be marvels in the way of beauty and accuracy of lettering. Her copy of the *Textus Roffensis* is described by Nichols as "one of the most lovely specimens of modern Saxon writing that can be imagined." She was well received in the University, for Mr. Rowe Mores speaks of her as "the *indefessa comes* of her brother's studies, a female student in the University and a favourite of Dr. Hudson and the Oxonians." [2] In 1702 she went with her brother to London and they kept on in their work together with great eagerness and satisfaction. There gradually grew up in Miss Elstob's mind a desire to translate and publish some Anglo-Saxon manuscript. She was encouraged in this not only by her brother, but by Dr. Hickes, "the great patron of the Septentrional Studies," who said that by publishing somewhat in Saxon she might invite "the ladies to be acquainted with the Language of their Predecessors, and the Original of their Mother Tongue." The text finally determined upon was the *Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory*. Dr. Hudson, "a man of so generous a mind as not to discourage learning, even in the female sex," gave her access to the ancient parchment Book of Homilies in the Bodleian. The book on St. Gregory appeared in 1709 under the title, *An English-Saxon Homily on the Birth-*

[1] Preface to Miss Elstob's *Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory*.

[2] Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 130. "Dissertation on Letter Founders," by Edward Rowe Mores.

Day of St. Gregory: Anciently used in the English-Saxon Church. Giving an Account of the Conversion of the English from Paganism to Christianity. Translated into Modern English, with Notes. It was a stately and dignified volume with a full-page engraving by Gribelin, and many engraved letters and head and tail pieces. In the capital "G" of Gregory was a portrait of Miss Elstob done by herself.[1] The Dedication to Queen Anne apologizes for using a language so "out-dated and antiquated," a language which "few Men and none of the other Sex have ventured to converse with" since the time when it was the current speech. But she adroitly pays the necessary compliment and at the same time recommends her theme, by pointing out that Anglo-Saxon was the language in which the Pious Progenitors of Queen Anne had received the Orthodox Faith of which the Queen was the undoubted Defender. The Preface, sixty pages long, is a learned account of the introduction of Christianity into England. In the text the Saxon and English are in parallel columns, and there is a brave apparatus of notes and comments. Following the English-Saxon Homily is a Latin version by William Elstob which he presents to his sister with the following Latin letter:

Gulielmus Elistobius
ELIZABETHÆ
Sorori suæ carissimæ
S. D.

Dum tu, soror mea dilectissima, Homiliæ Saxonicæ, de gentis nostræ Conversione paras versionem Anglicam fœminis liberalibus: nonnulli forte ex amicis nostris, tum Academicis tum aliis, Latinam postulant hominibus eruditis. Id te velle accomodare venis ad me dicens, bene autem posse negâsti. Verecundius sane id quam verius. Sed favendum omnino verecundiæ, præsertim muliebri: maximè autem tuæ, cum in te virtus illa sit

[1] Mr. Rowe Mores, in *Dissertation on Letter Founders*, says of Miss Elstob: "In her latter years she was tutoress in the family of the Duke of *Portland*, where we have visited her in her sleeping-room at *Bulstrode*, surrounded with books and dirtiness, the usual appendages of the folks of learning. But if any one wishes to see her as she was when she was the favorite of Dr. *Hudson* and the *Oxonians*, they may view her portraiture in the initial G of *The English Saxon homily on the birthday of St. Gregory*." This portrait is repeated in his *Grammar*.

notissima. Quare, quod poscis, dulcis & indefessa studiorum meorum comes, do tibi Latinè. Non Ciceronianè, ut tu velis, id est ornatè, at non ineptè tamen: iisdem ferè verbis repositis quæ in Saxonica olim tansfusa, vel ex Turonensi Gregorio, vel tuo, vel ex Beda nostrate, vel utroque Diacono, & Johanne & Paulo. Eadem plane ratione, qua jam pridem Orosium à nobis elucubratum scis, & qua Gregorii tui Curam Pastoralem, Deo favente, & adjutrice te, Eruditis perlibenter darem. Vale.

Kal. Jun. MDCCIX.

The book was published by subscription and the list of subscribers is an interesting one. We, of course, find the Anglo-Saxon scholars, such as Mr. Thwaites [1] and Dr. Hickes, various Oxonians, the Elstobs of Canterbury and Durham, and others who were in the same religious or learned circles. Various letters to Ralph Thoresby [2] show his interest. In March, 1708–09, she sent him the frontispiece to the *Homily* saying there would be other ornaments in the way of borders and letters "which will make the book somewhat dear, but I would willingly have it as beautiful as possible." In May, 1709, she thanks him for procuring "so noble a number of encouragers" to her work. Nearly half of the two hundred and sixty subscribers are women. Lady Elizabeth Hastings and Lady Catharine Jones, Mary Astell's friends, are there; and Lady Winchilsea's friends, the Thynnes, the Worseleys, and the Thanets, but not Mary Astell or Lady Winchilsea. The literary set — Pope, Swift, Gay, Addison, Steele — is not represented. Women of title, clergymen, and scholars make up the list.[3]

The Preface is of personal as well as learned interest. Miss Elstob did not enter upon the career of authorship without an uneasy recognition of the opprobrium she might bring upon herself by aspirations so unfeminine. She was, in her own mind, fortified by the elegant Latin treatise in which "Mrs. Anna Maria à Schurman, that Glory of her Sex," had answered, with

[1] In the "G" of Gregorium is a portrait of Mr. Thwaites as St. Gregory. (Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 131.)

[2] *Letters of Eminent Men addressed to Ralph Thoresby, F. R. S.*

[3] A new edition of this *Homily* was brought out by William Pickering, Leicester, 1839.

due scholastic form and dignity, the usual objections made by Gentlemen to Women's Learning, but in deference to the readers of her *Homily* she felt the necessity of a few words of self justification:

> For first, I know it will be said, What has a Woman to do with Learning? This I have known urged by some Men, with an Envy unbecoming that greatness of Soul, which is said to dignify their Sex. . . . Where is the Fault in Womens seeking after Learning? why are they not to be valu'd for acquiring to themselves the noblest Ornaments? what hurt can this be to themselves? what Disadvantage to others? But there are two things usually opposed against Womens Learning. That it makes them impertinent, and neglect their household Affairs. Where this happens it is a Fault. But it is not the Fault of Learning, which rather polishes and refines our Nature, and teaches us that Method and Regularity, which disposes us to greater Readiness and Dexterity in all kinds of Business. I do not observe it so frequently objected against Womens Diversions, that They take them off from Household Affairs. Why therefore should those few among us, who are Lovers of Learning, altho' no better account cou'd be given of it than its being a Diversion, be deny'd the Benefit and Pleasure of it, which is both so innocent and improving. . . . I shall not enter into any more of the Reasons why some Gentlemen are so eager to deny us this privilege: I am more surprised, and even ashamed, to find any of the Ladies were more violent than they, in carrying on the same charge. Who despairing to arrive at any eminent or laudable degree of knowledge, seem totally to abandon themselves to Ignorance, contenting themselves to sit down in Darkness, as if they either had not Reason, or it were not capable by being rightly cultivated, of bringing them into the Light. . . . Admit a Woman may have Learning, is there no other kind of Learning to employ her time? What is this Saxon? What has she to do with this barbarous antiquated Stuff? so useless, so altogether out of the way? . . . I fear, if things were rightly consider'd, that the charge of Barbarity would rather fall upon those who, while they fancy themselves adorn'd with the Embellishments of foreign Learning, are ignorant, even to barbarity, of the Faith, Religion, the Laws and Customs, and Language of their Ancestors.[1]

It was inevitable that the learning in Miss Elstob's work should be thought of by many as in reality the work of her

[1] *Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory*, p. ii.

brother. On this point, towards the close of the Preface, she comments rather ambiguously as follows:

I have been askt the Question, more than once, whether this Performance was all my own? How properly such a Question may be ask'd by those who know with whom I live, I shall not dispute: But since some there are who may have a Curiosity to know the same thing, who yet suspect the Decency of such a Question: that they may be under no Uneasiness on this account, they may be pleas'd to understand that I have a kind Brother, who is always ready to assist and encourage me in my Studies. I might say much of my Obligations on this account: wou'd he permit me to express my self at large on that Subject. But as I think it no shame to me to take any Advice where it may be so easily obtain'd: so I should think it unpardonable to be guilty of such a Silence, as might make me seem averse to all Acknowledgement.

After the publication of the *Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory* Miss Elstob made a visit to Canterbury where her uncle was prebendary. The number of Canterbury names in her list of subscribers shows that her fame for learning had preceded her. She was very favorably received, especially by some ladies of rank, one of whom expressed a desire to study Anglo-Saxon under her direction. In pursuance of this project Miss Elstob began at once on the preparation of an *Anglo-Saxon Grammar*.[1] In 1715, when the *Grammar* finally appeared, Miss Elstob wrote thus in a Preface addressed to Dr. Hickes:

I was more particularly gratified with the new Friendship and Conversation, of a young Lady, whose Ingenuity and Love of Learning is well known and esteem'd, not only in that Place, but by yourself: and which so far indear'd itself to me, by her promise that she wou'd learn the *Saxon Tongue*, and do me the Honour to be my *Scholar*, as to make me think of composing an *English Grammar* of that Language for her use. That Ladies Fortune hath so disposed of her since that time, and hath placed her at so great distance, as that we have had no Opportunity, of treating farther on this Matter, either by Discourse or Correspondence. However, though a Work of a larger Extent, and which hath amply experienced your Encouragement, did for some time make

[1] This *Grammar* is "remarkable for being the first effort to present the study of Old English through the medium of modern English." (Adams, Eleanor N.: *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566–1800*, p. 92.)

me lay aside this Design, yet I did not wholly reject it. . . . But considering the Pleasure I my self had reaped from the Knowledge I have gained from this Original of our Mother Tongue, and that others of my own Sex might be capable of the same Satisfaction: I resolv'd to give them the Rudiments of that Language in an English Dress.

The long Preface to the *Grammar* is chiefly taken up with an attack on John Brightland, author of the *Whole System of English Education*, and other wise grammarians who had spoken lightly of Anglo-Saxon and especially of the *Thesaurus* of Dr. Hickes. One of the aspersions cast by the gentlemen on their mother tongue was that the Northern Languages "consist of nothing but *Monosyllables*," and Miss Elstob plunges into a lengthy defense of monosyllables with so many quotations from English verse as to show that being "mistress of eight foreign languages" did not prevent her from being exceedingly well read in the poetical literature of her own tongue. This portion of the Preface is followed by a diatribe against those who consider the study of antiquities and of the Saxon tongue as belonging to a lower order of mind, and not contributing to a "just stile" as do the classics.[1] This topic, also, is illustrated by literary characterizations so numerous and apt as to show wide and discriminating reading in English prose.[2]

[1] July 31, 1715, Mr. Hearne wrote to Mr. Hickes thanking him for his "excellently learned *Thesaurus*," and for Mrs. Elstob's *Grammar*. He comments on her Preface as "judicious, learned, and elegant." He is particularly pleased with her remarks on the author of the "Dissertation on reading the Classicks, and forming a just stile." This gentleman was of St. Edmund's Hall and was always looked upon as a vain, flashy person. "I look'd upon him as the most unfit Person I knew of a Scholar to write upon this Subject. . . . His book hath been sufficiently ridiculed & condemned her by y^{e} best Judges." (*Hearne's Collections*, vol. IV, p. 83.)

[2] An interesting fact in connection with the publication of the *Grammar* has to do with the type. Some years after the printing of the *Homily* the house of the printer, Mr. Bowyer, was burned and all the Anglo-Saxon type was destroyed. They could not have printed the *Grammar* had not Lord Chief Justice Parker provided the funds for cutting new type. In 1753 Mr. N. Bowyer, son of the printer of the *Grammar*, sent this type, as a curiosity, to Mr. Edward Rowe Mores with this letter: "I make bold to transmit to Oxford, through your hands, the Saxon punches and matrices, which you were pleased to intimate would not be unacceptable to that learned Body. It would be a

Miss Elstob was a redoubtable champion in the cause of Anglo-Saxon learning. At the beginning of her career, in 1709, just as her *Homily on the Birthday of St. Gregory* was coming from the press, Swift had spoken of her as one of the Professors in the College of Madonella, ascribing to her the publication of "two of the choicest Saxon novels, which are said to have been in as much repute at Queen Emma's Court, as the 'Memoires from the New Atalantis' are with those of ours."[1] This disparaging allusion may have predisposed Miss Elstob to answer Swift with exceptional energy when he ranged himself with the scorners of Anglo-Saxon learning. In 1737 Mr. Ballard, in expressing surprise at the appearance of some new opponent of Saxon, wrote: "Indeed I thought that the bad success Dean Swift had met with in this affair from the incomparably learned and ingenious Mrs. Elstob, would have deterred all others from once opening their mouths on this head.[2]

great satisfaction to me if I could by this means perpetuate the munificence of the noble Donor, to whom I am originally indebted for them, the late Lord Chief Justice Parker, afterwards Earl of Macclesfield, who, among the numerous Benefactors which my father met with, after his house was burnt in 1712–13, was so good as to procure those types to be cut, to enable him to print Mrs. Elstob's Saxon Grammar. England had not then the advantage of such an Artist in Lettercutting as has since arisen: and that as my father received them from a great Patron of Learning, his son consigns them to the greatest Seminary of it." (Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. II, pp. 355–59.) In 1768 Mr. Edward Rowe Mores presented these punches and matrices to the Society of Antiquaries, and the Reverend Mr. Pegge at that time communicated to the Society some account of William and Elizabeth Elstob. (*Archæologia*, 1804, vol. I, p. xxv.) The difficulty in getting good type is shown by the following letters: May 19, 1713, Mr. Robert Nelson wrote to Mr. Wanley: "Pray do me the favor to write out the *Saxon* characters for Mr. Bowyer, as you have kindly promised; despatch in this affair is of great consequence because my Lord Chief Justice Parker does intend to assist towards repairing this misfortune by giving him a set of press letters, and is very uneasy that he is not ready to begin his friend's book which requires these characters to perfect it." (*Anecdotes of Bowyer*, p. 493.) Mr. Wanley said that he wrote out the letters in the most exact and able manner that he could "But it signified little; for when the alphabet came into the hands of the workman (who was but a blunderer) he could not imitate the fine and regular stroke of the pen; so that the letters are not only clumsy, but unlike those that I drew. This appears by *Mrs. Elstob's Saxon Grammar* being the book mentioned by Mr. Nelson." (*Ibid.*, p. 498.)

[1] Nichols: *Illustrations of Literary History*, vol. I, p. 804.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. IV, pp. 211-12.

The *Homily* and the *Grammar* gave Miss Elstob, at thirty-two, a distinguished place in the world of scholarship. She had also shown unusual skill with her pencil. Not only were her transcripts of manuscripts noted for their beauty, but she also drew admirable portraits. In 1737 Mr. Ballard wrote Mr. Joseph Ames:

I design, if possible, to make a tour to London this Winter, just to peep upon a few choice friends, and will bring Miss Elstob's Life of her Brother along with me, to pleasure you with. But you must be silent in the affair, for some particular reasons not proper here to be mentioned. Besides the above mentioned *Life*, I have a dozen pieces of this fine accomplished gentlewoman's drawings, amongst which are pictures of herself, Dr. Hickes, Mr. Dryden, and Johannes Ogilvius, etc. very masterly done, and, as I am told, very extraordinary true likenesses.[1]

We get no further completed work from Miss Elstob after the *Grammar* of 1715, but the six years between the *Homily* and the *Grammar* were rich in study and plans. In February, 1708–09, Mr. Thoresby wrote to Dr. Richardson:

Amongst the Authors, I might have mentioned some of the female sex; as the Bishop of Sarum's lady, and Miss Elstob; the former has writ a Method of Devotion, the latter translated a piece of Mons. Scudery from the French, and added some of her own: and is for giving us a more correct Edition of Sir John Spelman's Saxon Psalms, in which tongue she is a great proficient, and has writ that in my Album, etc.[2]

The "work of larger extent" for which Miss Elstob temporarily set aside her *Grammar* was the proposed publication of a Saxon Homilarium with English translations and notes. That this Homilarium, which was to have been her great work, was well under way by 1712 is indicated by the following letter, December 23, 1712, from Dr. Hickes to Dr. Charlett:

I suppose you may have seen Miss Elstob, sister to Mr. Elstob, formerly fellow of your Coll. and the MSS. she hath brought to be printed

[1] Nichols: *Illustrations of Literary History*, vol. IV, p. 213.
[2] Nichols: *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 804.

at your press. The University hath acquired much reputation and honour at home and abroad, by the Saxon books printed there, as well as by those printed in Latin and Greek, and the publication of the MSS. she hath brought (the most correct I ever saw or read) will be of great advantage to the Church of England against the Papists; for the honour of our Predecessors the English Saxon Clergy, especially of the Episcopal Order, and the credit of our country to which Miss Elstob will be counted abroad as great an ornament in her way, as Madam Dacier is to France. I do not desire you to give her all encouragement, because I believe you will do it of your own accord from your natural temper to promote good and great works. But I desire you to recommend her, and her great undertaking to others, for she and it are both very worthy to be encouraged, and were I at Oxford, I should be a great solicitor for her. And had I acquaintance enough with Mr. Vice-Chancellor I had troubled him with a letter in her behalf. I will add no more but to tell you that the news of Miss Elstob's encouragement at the University will be very acceptable to me, because it will give her work credit here, where it shall be promoted to the utmost power by your Philo-Sax. and Philo-Goth. and most faithful, humble Servt.[1]

In February, 1713, Bedford wrote to Mr. Hearne: "I am to desire y^{o} from him to give all y^{e} assistance & encouragement y^{o} can to Mrs. Elstob's work, who is now going down to y^{e} University again ab^{t} it." [2] Mr. Hearne responded in March: "I wish Mrs. Elstob good success. Tho' if she meet with no better Encouragement here than I have done as yet 't will not be great." [3]

In the same year Mr. Bowyer printed "Some Testimonies of Learned Men in favour of the intended edition of the *Saxon* Homilies, concerning the learning of the author of those Homilies, and the advantages to be hoped from an edition of them."[4] And three letters from Miss Elstob to the Lord Treasurer show that he solicited and obtained the Queen's Bounty towards printing the *Homilies*.[5]

In spite of all this encouragement the publication of the

[1] Dr. Hickes also wrote strongly in favor of Miss Elstob's work in his manuscript Preface to *Orosius*. (Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 132.)

[2] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. IV, p. 87. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 93.

[4] Nichols: *Anecdotes of Bowyer*, p. 48.

[5] Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, pp. 125–27.

Homilies hung fire for many months. It is possible that the death of Mr. Elstob and of Dr. Hickes in 1715 delayed matters by depriving Miss Elstob of able advocates and counselors. In July, 1716, Sir P. Sydenham indicates his concern that the book had not yet appeared.[1] In November of that year Mr. T. Baker writes apologetically to Mr. Hearne that he is "deep in M^rs^. Elstop and Mr. Strype," and that the work does not admit of haste.[2] Later in the same month Mr. Hearne gives the cheering news that "Mrs. Elstob's book is going on at last."[3] But only five of the *Homilies* were actually printed off at Oxford.[4] The great scheme failed for want of money. Miss Elstob's own fortune was apparently involved, for in 1718 Mr. T. Baker wrote to Hearne that Miss Elstob was "lately gone off for debt." [5]

Except these few facts concerning the *Homilies* very few details are known concerning Miss Elstob's life after 1715. Bishop Smalridge[6] aided her for a time, but she could not endure the thought of being a burden on her friends, and she finally went to Evesham, Worcestershire, where she started a little school. Mr. Tindale, in his *History of Evesham*, says that he was credibly informed that her weekly stipend in this school was at first but a groat a week. She was in this very contracted and difficult way of life for nearly twenty years. When relief came it was as the result of the efforts of an obscure young Anglo-Saxon scholar, Mr. George Ballard, a lady's-stay-maker,

[1] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. v, p. 271.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 337. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. v, p. 358.

[4] The folio manuscripts of Miss Elstob's *Homilies* are now preserved among the Lansdowne Manuscripts in the British Museum. See *Bibliothecæ Lansdownianæ*, nos. 370–74, and *Bibliothecæ Harleiana*, vol. I, p. 323, no. *27.

[5] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. VI, p. 255. Mr. Rowe Mores said that Miss Elstob had once had a genteel fortune, but that she had "pursued too much the drug called learning, and in that pursuit failed of being careful of any one thing necessary."

[6] "The learned Saxonist, Mrs. Elstob, was one, among many others, who about this period [1714] experienced the new Bishop's bounty." (Nichols: *Illustrations of Literary History*, vol. III, p. 227.) Mr. Thomas Seward, Bishop of Lichfield, knew Miss Elstob and was one of the contributors to her support. (Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 135.)

who became acquainted with Miss Elstob and described her situation so effectively to one of his customers, a Mrs. Chapone, that this lady wrote a circular letter representing Miss Elstob's extensive learning, her service to literature, her multiplied distresses, her meekness and patience, and sent it to the neighboring gentry. An annuity of twenty guineas was raised, and Miss Elstob was enabled to keep an assistant so that she could again "taste of that food of the mind from which she had been so long oblig'd to fast."

Another result of Mrs. Chapone's letter was a possible appointment for Miss Elstob as mistress of a charity school kept up by Lady Elizabeth Hastings. With regard to this plan Miss Elstob wrote the following very interesting letter to Mr. George Ballard:

Since you desire to know if I have accepted Mrs. Capon's proposal, I do, though I am very sensible it is not commendable to expose a private correspondence, venture to communicate to so good a friend, a copy of the worthy gentleman's letter, sent her in answer to her vastly kind recommendation of me, and the charming letter she sent to me. In answer to hers, after I had received your answer, I assured her of my readiness to serve that excellent lady, as far as lyes in my power. But there are some things to be taught in such a school, which I cannot pretend to: I mean, the two accomplishments of a good housewife, spinning and knitting. Not that I would be thought to be above doing any commendable work proper for my sex; for I have continually in my thoughts the glorious character of a virtuous woman, Proverbs xxxi, 13; "She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands." And as an instance of the truth of this, the gown I had on when you gave me the favour of a visit was part of it my own spinning, and I wear no other stockings but what I knit myself: yet I do not think myself proficient enough in these arts to become a teacher of them. As to your objection on the meanness of the scholars, I assure you, Sir, I should think it as glorious an employment to instruct those poor children, as to teach the children of the greatest. But I must tell you that mine may be termed a life of disappointments from my cradle till now, nor do I expect any other while I live. This, and hearing no more of that affair, makes me think her ladyship is provided with a mistress before now, there being many more deserving than myself, that are in want of such an employment. Nor do I repine; for I am so inured to disappointments, that I expect nothing else, and I receive

them with as much easiness as others do their greatest prosperity. . . . I often compare myself to poor John Tucker, whose Life I read when a girl in Winstanley's Lives of the Poets, which affected me so much that I cannot forget it yet. He is there described to have been an honest, industrious, poor man, but, notwithstanding his indefatigable industry, as the author writes, "no butter would stick on his bread."[1]

The Mrs. Chapone who wrote the circular letter concerning Miss Elstob was Sarah Kirkham, an intimate girlhood friend of Mary Granville, afterward Mrs. Pendarves, but better known as Mrs. Delany. Sally Kirkham is described by Mrs. Delany as a girl of "extraordinary understanding, lively imagination, and humane disposition," of "uncommon genius and intrepid spirit." In 1725, at the age of twenty-four she married the Reverend John Chapone, and they went to live in Stanton, Gloucestershire, and little more is heard of her until the writing of this letter before 1734. Mrs. Chapone meant the letter for the neighboring gentry, but it finally reached a more distinguished audience. Mrs. Pendarves writes:

I told you in my last I had left Sally's letter with Mrs. Pointz. She gave it to her husband, who desired the Duke to read it to the Queen. The Queen was so touched with the letter that she immediately sent for Mrs. Pointz, to inquire into some more particulars about the person mentioned in it, and *the person who wrote it.* Mrs. Pointz said she knew no more than what the letter told, but that Mrs. Chapone was a friend of ours. The Queen said she never in her life read a better letter, that it had touched her heart, and ordered immediately an hundred pounds for Mrs. Elstob, and said she "need never fear a necessitous old age whilst she lived, and that when she wanted more to ask for it, and she should have it." I think this was acting like a queen, and ought to be known. . . . I hope this may be the means of serving our friend Sally, the letter was the whole discourse of the drawing-room. The Queen asked the Duke "When he should be able to write such a letter." He answered, honestly, "Never." Mrs. Pointz has asked many particulars about Mr. Chapone, and I did him justice.[2]

[1] Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IV, p. 137.

[2] *Letters of Mrs. Delany*, 1st Series, vol. I, p. 263. Mrs. Chapone was evidently a gifted letter-writer and it is with a sense of great loss that we read of the accidental burning of many of her letters in 1860. (*Letters of Mrs. Delaney*, 1st Series, vol. I, p. 263 n.)

Queen Caroline's interest was so genuinely aroused that she not only ordered the £100 to be at once sent to Miss Elstob, but promised to repeat the same every five years. This was evidently with the idea that she should be taken from the little school at Evesham and put into her proper station as "mistress of a boarding-school for young ladies of a higher rank." Such might have been the outcome had not the money lapsed with the death of the Queen in 1737.

All plans for Miss Elstob seemed to end in failure till "Sally's historical epistle," as Mrs. Pendarves called it, was sent to the Duchess of Portland at Bulstrode.[1] The result in this case was of permanent value, for Miss Elstob was invited by the Duchess to make her home at Bulstrode as instructor of the children. Of this appointment Mrs. Pendarves wrote, December 12, 1738, to her mother:

The Duchess has now a thousand fears, lest my Lord and Lady Oxford should have any objections against taking her, but I hope they will all prove false. . . . Mrs. Elstob seems, out of modesty and diffidence of herself, to decline coming, but it would be most imprudent of her to decline such an offer, when no fatigue will be imposed upon her, but all imaginable care will be taken of her. I own I long to have *you see her*, that I may really know what sort of woman she is. My Lord Oxford objects to her not speaking French, but the Duchess answers she shall have a master for that, or a maid to talk, and all she requires and hopes of Mrs. Elstob is to instruct her children in the principles of religion and virtue, to teach them to speak, read, and understand English well, to cultivate their minds as far as their capacity will allow, and to keep them company in the house and when her health and strength will permit to take the air with them. All this she is surely well qualified to do, and it would be a sincere joy to me to have our worthy Duchess possest of so valuable a person.[2]

Ten days later Mrs. Pendarves wrote again from Bulstrode:

The Elstobian matter is *quite fixed*, and she expressed the utmost satisfaction at having secured such a worthy woman to educate her children; I wrote last post to Mrs. Elstob to tell her that the Duchess looked on her as engaged to her, and that her salary should begin on Xmas Day next, though she could not conveniently take her into her family till Midsummer. I hope she will write to the Duchess, and sup-

[1] *Letters of Mrs. Delany*, 1st Series, vol. II, p. 31. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 14.

pose she will of course; I gave her a little hint but would not have it mentioned that I did.... I think your advice to Mrs. Elstob quite right about *paying debts;* a person of such principles as hers cannot enjoy any advantages without doing that justice when it is in her power to do it.[1]

In August, 1739, Miss Elstob was in Evesham and several times met her benefactor, Mrs. Chapone, of whom she gives a lively picture showing that letter-writing was not Mrs. Chapone's only title to fame. Miss Elstob writes:

The last time she was here, I had an exceeding pleasure, though not without some concern, at hearing a long and *warm* dispute between that charming woman, and Mr. Ben Seward, on some methodistical notions, in which it was by better judges than myself agreed that the *female* antagonist had *much the advantage over him*.[2]

Miss Elstob spent the remaining seventeen years of her life with the Duchess of Portland. They were comfortable, leisurely, studious years, a delightful haven after her twenty years of hardship, penury, and intellectual starvation. But she was fifty-six when she went to Bulstrode, and the ease and security of her life there came too late to rouse into life the mental activity so long dormant. Miss Elstob's real life was the twenty years with her brother, years of plain living and high aspirations while they worked together in the realms of pure scholarship. It would be difficult to find a more satisfying example of literary comradeship than that offered by the learned young curate and the learned young sister, the "*dulcis & indefessa comes*" of his studies.[3]

Elizabeth Blackwell (fl. 1739)

In 1739 Mrs. Elizabeth Blackwell published in two folio volumes *A Curious Herbal, containing Five Hundred Cuts, of the most useful Plants, which are now used in the Practice of Physick, engraved on folio Copper Plates, after Drawings taken from the Life, by*

[1] *Letters of Mrs. Delany*, 1st Series, vol. II, p. 18. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 56.

[3] A full *Life* of Miss Elstob is much to be desired. In Ballard's *Letters*, in the Letters of many contemporary antiquaries and Saxon scholars, especially Dr. George Hickes, and in manuscripts at Bulstrode, there must be many further sources of interesting information concerning her life and work. Especially would Mrs. Chapone's letter be a valuable contribution.

Elizabeth Blackwell. To which is added, a short Description of the Plants and their common Uses in Physick. Printed for John Nourse at the Lamb without Temple Bar. The first of these magnificent volumes is dedicated to the famous Dr. Richard Mead, "Physician to Kings," as the one who first advised the publication of the work. The dedication of the second volume is to Isaac Rand, an apothecary and Fellow of the Royal Society, and Curator of the Botanical Garden at Chelsea, as the one to whom she went for assistance in all difficult botanical questions. The short descriptions of the plants were taken mainly from Mr. Joseph Miller's *Botanicum Officinale* with his consent. She lived near the Botanical Garden and made all her drawings from life. She also etched them on copper, and colored them herself. The book received high recognition. Much of the work must have been done by 1735, for on October 1 of that year the following testimonial, now one of the title-pages, was written:

We whose names are underwritten, having seen a considerable Number of the Drawings from which the Plates are to be engraved, and likewise some of the Coloured Plants, think it a Justice done the Publick to declare our Satisfaction with them, and our good Opinion of the Capacity of the Undertaker.

R. Mead, M.D.	Ia. Douglas, M.D.	Joseph Miller
G. L. Tessier, M.D.	James Sherard, M.D.	Isaac Rand
Alexander Stuart, M.D.	W. Cheseldon	Rob. Nicholls

This statement was repeated in French and the names again signed.

A further endorsement on the completion of the book was dated July 1, 1737. It is as follows:

Imagines hasce Plantarum Officinalium per Dominam Elizabetham Blackwell delineatas ceri incisas & depictas, iis qui Medicinæ Operam dant, perutiles fore judicamus.

Thomas Pellet, Præs.
Henricus Plumptre
Richardus Tyson
Peircuis Dod
Gulienius Wasey
} *Censores.*

In 1757–73 there was a fine republication of the work in Nuremberg with an addition of a hundred plants, and a highly laudatory Preface. The work was recognized at once as of great practical value because of the accuracy of the drawings and the large number of plants represented. The charm of the plates is beyond question so far as delicacy of outline and beauty of coloring are concerned. They are superior to the plates in Darwin's *Botanic Garden*, nearly half a century later. The Blackwellia race of plants was named after Mrs. Blackwell in recognition of her admirable work.[1]

Mrs. Blackwell is herself an enigma. She emerges into public notice for three years, but her life before and after sinks into obscurity. She was said to be "a virtuous gentlewoman, daughter of a worthy merchant," who gave her a handsome portion. Her husband was Alexander Blackwell, a printer. He was a well-educated and able man, but generally counted an adventurer. He at one time entered upon a project of conducting a printing establishment of his own. His failure in this landed him in a debtor's prison where he was confined several years. Mrs. Blackwell's *Herbal* was made by her for the purpose of securing his release. He is said to have aided her in the foreign terminology and in the abridgments from Miller. When he was free her object was accomplished and we hear of no further work. It would be interesting to know how she came to have so much skill. It would be more interesting to know the psychology of her prompt abandonment of work by which she won both fame and money, and in which she took such evident delight.[2]

Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper (fl. 1735-40)

It is to be regretted that so few facts are accessible concerning Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper. Her works seem to offer interesting points of departure for investigation into her life and education, but we know little about her except that her literary ventures belong be-

[1] Allibone's *Dictionary of Authors.*

[2] Bruce, James: *Lives of Eminent Men of Aberdeen; Chalmer's Dictionary; The Gentleman's Magazine,* vol. XVII; *Anecdotes of Bowyer,* p. 556.

tween 1735 and 1740. She was the wife of Thomas Cooper,[1] who was either an auctioneer or a book-seller, or possibly both, and she was married before 1735. Beyond these meager facts our knowledge of her must be gleaned from her books. Apparently her first literary venture was a comedy. It was entitled *The Rival Widows; or, the Fair Libertine*, and was brought out at the Covent Garden Theater in 1735. It had a successful run of nine nights. Baker says that "allowing for the too common freedom of female dramatists, this is far from a bad comedy." [2] Genest, after briefly outlining the play and commenting on various passages that seem to him borrowed from preceding dramatists, says: "It is on the whole a tolerable play, but it wants incident sadly." But he does not agree with Baker as to the moral tone of the play, for he says of Lady Bellair, the heroine, "Lady Bellair is gay and extravagant, but of good principles at bottom . . . it is with much impropriety that she is called a Fair Libertine — she is only above vulgar prejudices." [3] In her preface to the play Mrs. Cooper says that it was designed "an Offering to the Sex" in that the chief character is a woman "capable of thinking for herself, and acting on the principles of Nature and Truth." Some indications of the characteristics of Lady Bellair may be found in the fact that Mrs. Horton was chosen to create the part. Millamant in Congreve's *Way of the World*, Lady Dainty in Burnaby's *The Reform'd Wife*, Lady Betty Modish in Cibber's *Careless Husband*, and Lady Townly in his *Provoked Husband*, were the parts in which Mrs. Horton's beauty and her elegance of dress and manner found their fitting opportunity. Lady Bellair belongs evidently to this class of fine lady coquettes, and a further point of interest concerning Mrs. Cooper is that on her benefit night she herself played the part of Lady Bellair. Either Mrs. Cooper had already shown enough ability as an amateur actress to warrant her appearance on the stage of one of the

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 2d Series, vol. XI, p. 101.
[2] Baker: *Biographia Dramatica*, vol. IV, p. 212.
[3] Genest: *Some Account of the English Stage*, vol. III, p. 461.

leading theaters, or she was well enough known as a writer or as a personality to make her presence in the cast a drawing card. That she could venture on the inevitable comparison with Mrs. Horton may indicate some possibilities in the way of her own attractive qualities. And it is to be further noted that she "unexpectedly and surprizingly" eclipsed Mrs. Horton. The *Prompter* endeavors to explain Mrs. Cooper's success by saying that she "looked" the character and represented with great "naturalnes," the somewhat bold and libertine heroine.[1]

Mrs. Cooper's second dramatic attempt was a tragedy which was not successful. It was acted but one night and was never printed.

This theatrical work was, however, only on the fringe of Mrs. Cooper's real interest. In 1737 she published a book entitled *The Muses Library; Or, a Series of English Poetry, from the Saxons, to the Reign of King Charles II containing, The Lives and Characters of all the known Writers in that Interva', the names of their Patrons; Complete Episodes, by way of Specimen of the larger Pieces, very near the intire works of some, and large Quotations from others. Being a General Collection of almost all the old valuable Poetry extant, now so industriously enquir'd after, tho' rarely to be found, but in the Studies of the Curious, and affording Entertainment on all Subjects, Philosophical, Historical, Moral, Satyrical, Allegorical, Critical, Heroick, Pastoral, Gallant, Amorous, Courtly and Sublime.* But one volume of this projected work was published. The early Georgian public was not trained to an interest in the past. Mrs. Cooper suffered the not infrequent fate of pioneers. There was even difficulty in working off one edition of the first volume, as is evident from its appearance in 1738 and 1741 with changed title-pages.[2] That Mrs. Cooper expected to publish the second volume, including the poets from Samuel Daniel to the time of Charles II, is shown not only by the statement in her Preface, but by interesting notes in the *Diary of William Oldys* (1696–1761), the famous

[1] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, March, 1735.
[2] Lowndes: *Bibliographical Manual.*

antiquary. In 1736 he was in London employed in seeing through the press a new edition of Raleigh's *History of the World.* His Chambers were in Gray's Inn and he was frequently consulted there "on obscure and obsolete writers by eminent men of letters." Two of the people in whom he was particularly interested were Thomas Hayward, who was compiling his *British Muse,* and Mrs. Cooper. In his *Diary* are the following records:

1737, June 22. Mrs. Cooper came to my chambers: said she would return Puttenham's *Art of Poesy*, Browne's *Pastorals*, and Sir Henry Wotton, when she had finished her extracts for the second volume of her *Muses' Library* to be published by Christmas.

July 4, Monday. Returned Sir T. More's works: some of his English poetry therein might be for Mrs. Cooper's work, or Mr. Haywards, on Fortune, etc.

Aug. 13. Rec'd letter from Mrs. Cooper to borrow old Marlowe's poem of *Hero and Leander* for the continuation of her *Muses' Library;* sent by the servant a very scarce collection of old poetry, called *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, in which are several pieces by the old Lord Vaux in King Henry the Eighth's time, the Earl of Oxford, Sir W. Raleigh, Mr. Edwards, Jasper Haywood, Hunis, Churchyard, Kinwelmarsh, Lloyd, Whetstone, etc., printed 4°. 1573. To borrow one of Caxton's books of Sir Hans Sloane and remember to apply the story of Absyrtus in the preface for Mr. Hayward's Collection of select thoughts from our old poets.[1]

Mrs. Cooper frequently comments on the difficulty and expense of gathering material for her enterprise and gratefully acknowledges "the generous Assistance of the Candid Mr. Oldys." Biographical data were also obtained only through most patient effort. The only *Lives of the Poets* to which she could have access were Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis* and the works of Phillips, Winstanley, and Jacob. Edward Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum* appeared in 1675. Its first volume gave brief biographical and critical notes on sixty-four authors from Robert of Gloucester to George Chapman, thus covering about the same ground as Mrs. Cooper's first volume which closes with Samuel Daniel. William Winstanley's *Lives of the English*

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 2d Series, vol. XI, pp. 101–02.

Poets was published in 1687. It includes notes on poets from William the Conqueror to James II with occasional brief illustrative extracts. *The Poetical Register* of Giles Jacob (1724) is, in the first volume, confined to dramatists and is based on Langbain. The second volume, *The Lives and Characters of the English Poets*, extends about a century and a quarter later than Mrs. Cooper's volume. In the period before 1600 about half the names in her volume are included and briefly commented on. Jacob also gives an occasional extract.

Mrs. Cooper was not, then, without predecessors in her undertaking. The novelty in her book was her assumption that people would not only like to know about the old poets, but that there would be many lovers of literature who would rejoice in reading the old poems, and very nearly in their original antiquated form. She gives ten pages from Langland, eleven from Barclay, twenty-eight from Sackville, twenty-four from Churchyard, thirty-five from Fulke Greville, thirty-one from Fairfax, and so on. Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare are less fully represented, as being already well known. The selections are the result of wide reading and are made because they pleased Mrs. Cooper's own taste. "What has given me Pleasure in my Closet," she says, "I have undertaken to recommend to the Publick; not presuming to inform the Judgment, but only awaken the Attention." That she failed to "awaken Attention" was the fault of the age. Her selections were representative and interesting.

Mrs. Cooper's book shows not only wide research and a full knowledge of extant criticism, but it also manifests a personal zest in reading and an unusual independence of literary judgment. This independence is shown in her choice of authors. Phillips, Winstanley, and Jacob had omitted Langland, but she says, "In my Judgment, no Writer, except *Chaucer*, and *Spenser*, for many Ages, had more of real Inspiration." Or take the case of Lydgate. Phillips mentions him, but not, apparently, from any personal knowledge of his work. Winstanley and Jacob praise him highly. Mrs. Cooper says of him: "Many

Authors are so profuse in his Praise as to rank him very little below his Master, and, often, quote them together; which rais'd my Curiosity so high, that I gave a considerable Price for his Works, and waded thro' a large Folio, hoping still to have my Expectation gratified. . . . But I must, either confess my own want of Penetration, or beg leave to dissent from his Admirers." She gives a long quotation from Lord Brook's *A Treatise of Humane Learning*, because his name has "never yet received the Honours it deserved." She is indignant at the general indifference to the work and fame of Edward Fairfax and writes a eulogy of several pages. Her comments on Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare are brief, since all agree on their preëminence. Mr. Lounsbury, after noting one or two errors in the book, says of it: "I know of no similar work produced at that period in which the knowledge displayed is so accurate and comprehensive, or the critical estimates so uniformly good and just. There was exhibited in it not merely freshness of judgment but the independence that springs from the study of writers at first hand." [1] Mrs. Cooper had in her the making of a scholar. She allowed herself no generalities. Whatever she said was based on a thorough study of the material under discussion. Furthermore, she acquainted herself with all extant critical opinion without thereby losing the power to form an opinion of her own.

Mrs. Cooper's Preface is an excellent, even an eloquent, piece of writing, in justification of poets as a nation's glory. She recognizes that "Merit is not its own Preservative" and wishes in her book to set up if possible "a Bulwark which shall preserve Merit from the attacks of Time." She considers her "Series of Poetry (which has never been aim'd at anywhere else) . . . one of the most valuable collections that ever was made publick." She has no apologies to make. In introducing to the moderns this august company of ancient poets she is saved from any possible self-consciousness by the dignity of her enterprise. The same tone pervades her Dedication. No

[1] Lounsbury: *Studies in Chaucer*, vol. III, p. 242.

single name is glorious enough to appear at the head of her list. She chooses rather a dedication to "the truly Honourable Society for the Encouragement of Learning." [1] That Society was then in the hey-day of its brief glory. Mrs. Cooper had, apparently, no thought of personally benefiting by her Dedications. On the contrary she counted this an opportunity to express what all authors and lovers of literature must feel towards a design "so great, seasonable, and humane" as that of this new organization, a design applauded by "all who have Generosity, Benevolence or Politeness."

As dramatist and actress Mrs. Cooper would deserve at least passing mention, but as a scholar, as an ardent advocate of early English poetry, she must take high rank, not only among the learned women, but also among the learned men of her day.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762)

No woman of the first half of the eighteenth century had a more active mind or facile pen than Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Although almost none of her work appeared in print in her lifetime, her personality made its own way, and she was early recognized as of note for genius and learned acquirements. It is, therefore, of especial interest to inquire into the particulars of her education, and to find out her status as a woman of letters.

The materials for such an inquiry are fairly abundant, and are mainly: her miscellaneous letters, first published in 1803; a fragmentary autobiographical romance, of which she says "not a sillable" except the names is feigned; and the *Introductory Anecdotes* by her granddaughter, Lady Louisa Stuart,[2]

[1] The statutes of this Society were dated May 27, 1736. In December Mr. Alex. Gordon wrote, "We are every day increasing both in number and in members either conspicuous for their quality or station, or learning and ingenuity." But constant difficulties arose between the Society and book-sellers. No plan tried proved satisfactory to both parties. By 1765 the finances of the Society were practically exhausted, and in April, 1746, the Society came to an abrupt close, after a starving and not very productive ten years. (Nichols: *Anecdotes of Bowyer*, pp. 134–38.)

[2] Miss Emily M. Symonds says of the author of the *Anecdotes:* "Lady Louisa Stuart inherited her grandmother's tastes for literary pursuits. That this taste

included in Lady Mary's *Letters and Works* brought out by Lord Wharncliffe, her great-grandson, in 1887. The important groups of letters containing personal details are those written to Mr. Montagu from about 1709 till their marriage in 1712, and the very large group to her family and friends, chiefly to Lady Bute, her daughter, during Lady Mary's stay in Italy from 1739 to1761.

Lady Mary's mother died when she was eight, and her father, too much a man of pleasure to trouble himself with the education of girls, gave his three young daughters into the care of "an old governess, who, though perfectly good and pious, wanted a capacity for so great a trust." [1] In commenting on the evil effects of an ignorant education, Lady Mary said: "My own was the worst in the world, being exactly the same as

was discouraged by her family is a real calamity, as all will agree who are familiar with the *Selections from her Manuscripts* (*Essays and Verses*), and the *Letters to Miss Clinton*. Her sketch of the family of John, Duke of Argyll, is a biographical gem, and her youthful letters read as if they had been written by one of Jane Austen's most charming heroines. Her satire is so sweet-tempered that it is evident she likes her victims none the less for her laughter, while her common-sense philosophy, with its sub-acid flavour of gentle cynicism may be studied with advantage even in these enlightened days. A glimpse of Lady Mary's daughter and granddaughter may be obtained from the *Diary* of Miss Burney, who met the two ladies at Mrs. Delany's in 1787. Lady Bute, she records, with an exterior the most forbidding to strangers, has powers of conversation the most entertaining and lively where she is intimate. She is full of anecdote, delights in strokes of general satire, yet with mere love of comic, not insidious ridicule. She spares not for giving her opinions, and laughs at fools as well as follies, with the shrewdest derision. Lady Louisa Stuart, her youngest daughter, has parts equal to those of her mother, with a deportment and appearance infinitely more pleasing; yet she is far from handsome, but proves how well beauty may be occasionally missed, when understanding and vivacity unite to fill up her place. . . . They seem both to inherit an ample portion of the wit of their mother and grandmother, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, though I believe them both to have escaped all inheritance of her faults. On the occasion of another and later meeting Miss Burney writes: 'Lady Bute and Lady Louisa were both in such high spirits themselves, that they kept up all the conversation between them with such a vivacity, an acuteness, and an observation on men and manners so clear and so sagacious, that it would be difficult to pass an evening of greater entertainment.'" (Symonds, Emily Morse: *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Her Times*, p. 537.)

[1] Symonds, Emily Morse: *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Her Times*, p. 4.

Clarissa Harlowe's; her pious Mrs. Norton so perfectly resembling my governess, who had been nurse to my mother. I could almost fancy the author was acquainted with her. She took so much pains from my infancy, to fill my head with superstitious tales and false notions, it was none of her fault I am not at this day afraid of witches and hobgoblins, or turned methodist." [1] But at least there were no hindering home influences, and Lady Mary had what Charles Lamb would call the luck to be "tumbled early into a closet of good old English books." Forsaking the dolls of her sisters she took refuge in her father's fine library and there she read with the absorption of a youthful Coleridge. She "got by heart all the poetry that came in her way," and she "read every romance as yet invented." Lady Louisa says she "possessed and left after her, the whole library of Mrs. Lenox's Female Quixote — Cleopatra, Cassandra, Clelia, Cyrus, Pharamond, Ibrahim, etc., etc. — all, like the lady Arabella's collection, '*Englished*,' mostly, '*by persons of honour*.' The chief favourite appeared to have been a translation of Monsieur Honoré d'Urfé's Astrea, once the delight of Henri Quatre and his court, and still admired and quoted by the *savans* who flourished under Louis XIV. In a blank page of this massive volume (which might have counterbalanced a pig of lead of the same size) Lady Mary had written in her fairest youthful hand the names and characteristic qualities of the chief personages thus: — the beautiful Diana, the volatile Climene, the melancholy Doris, Celedon the faithful, Adamas the wise, and so on; forming two long columns." [2] Among

[1] *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (Bell, 1887), vol. II, p. 240.

[2] *Ibid.*, LXXVI. Lady Louisa gives the later history of these ponderous black books saying that they survived the wear and tear of a century through the protection of an excellent person who had been Lady Bute's attendant before her marriage, and a part of the family ever after. "Her spectacles were always to be found in Clelia and Cassandra, which she studied unceasingly six days of the week, prizing them next to the Bible and Tillotson's Sermons; because, to give her own words, they were all about good and virtuous people, not like the wicked trash she now saw young people get from the circulating libraries."

Lady Mary's earliest attempts at authorship were romantic stories in imitation of these her favorite authors.

But along with her romances, and soon superseding them, were sterner studies. She early began to teach herself Latin. In her account of herself under the name Lætitia, she said:

> Her appetite for knowledge increasing with her years, without considering the toilsome task she undertook, she began to learn herself the Latin grammar, and with the help of an uncommon memory and indefatigable labour, made herself so far mistress of that language as to be able to understand almost any author. This extraordinary attachment to study became the theme of public discourse. Her Father, though no scholar himself, was flattered with a pleasure in the progress she made, and this reputation which she did not seek (having no end in view but her own amusement) gave her enviers and consequently enemies among the girls of her own age.

Lady Mary was but fourteen when her "just and knowing" criticism of a play, her knowledge of Latin, and her relish for the classics, excited the wonder and admiration of Mr. Wortley Montagu. He was as amazed "as if he had heard a piece of wax work talk." [1] But the envy of her girl companions and the liberal praise of Mr. Wortley are not the only proofs that Lady Mary's shining talents and learned tastes met early recognition. Her uncle, Mr. William Fielding, "perceived her capacity, corresponded with her, and encouraged her pursuit of information." Bishop Burnet showed himself most friendly, and condescended to direct her studies. Mr. Wortley also kept up a kind of scholarly guidance. Lady Mary said to Spence in Rome in 1741: "When I was young I was a great admirer of Ovid's Metamorphoses, and that was one of the chief reasons that set me upon the thoughts of stealing the Latin language. Mr. Wortley was the only person to whom I communicated my design, and he encouraged me in it. I used to study five or six hours a day for two years in my father's library; and so got that language, whilst everybody else thought I was reading nothing but novels and romances." [2] By the time she was

[1] Symonds: *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Her Times*, p. 7.
[2] *Spence's Anecdotes*, by Singer (Ed. 1820), p. 232.

twenty Italian had been added to her accomplishments. In an early undated letter to Mrs. Hewet she wrote: "I have begun to learn Italian, and am much mortified I cannot do it of a signor of Monsieur Resingade's recommendation; but 'tis always the fate of women to obey, and my papa has promised me to a Mr. Cassotti. I am afraid I shall never understand it as well as you do." By 1710 she was quoting Italian verse, and in the following year she corresponded with Mr. Resingade in Italian. That she was still working under Mr. Cassotti in 1712 is apparent from her request that Mr. Wortley should send one of his letters to her under the care of Mr. Cassotti, her "Italian master." At this period, or a little later, she also learned French, so that she wrote letters and essays in that language. Her continued devotion to study is shown by a letter from Thoresby to Anne Wortley in 1709: "I am now so much alone, I have leisure to pass whole days in reading. . . . My study is nothing but dictionaries and grammars. I am trying whether it be possible to learn without a master; I am not certain (and dare hardly hope) I shall make any great progress; but I find the study so diverting. I am not only easy, but pleased with the solitude that indulges it."[1]

Lady Mary's diligence resulted in 1710 in a translation of the Latin version of the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus which she sent to Bishop Burnet with a notable letter. Of the translation she says: "Here is the work of one week of my solitude — by the many faults in it your lordship will easily believe I spent no more time upon it; it was hardly finished when I was obliged to begin my journey, and I had not leisure to write it over again. You have it here without any corrections with all its blots and errors." Bishop Burnet returned the document with emendations which in the present printed form are given in italics.[2] In spite of the numerous changes suggested as closer to the original, the translation remains as a remarkable production for a self-educated girl of twenty. Even more remarkable as evidencing maturity of thought and command of an admirable English

[1] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. I, p. 40. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 403.

style is the letter, which is of particular significance in connection with the contemporary attitude towards the learned woman:

My sex is usually forbid studies of this nature, and folly reckoned so much our proper sphere, we are sooner pardoned any excesses of that, than the least pretensions to reading or good sense. We are permitted no books but such as tend to the weakening and effeminating of the mind. Our natural defects are every way indulged, and it is looked upon as in a degree criminal to improve our reason, or fancy we have any. We are taught to place all our art in adorning our outward forms, and permitted, without reproach, to carry that custom even to extravagancy, while our minds are entirely neglected, and, by disuse of reflections, filled with nothing but the trifling objects our eyes are daily entertained with. This custom, so long established and industriously upheld, makes it even ridiculous to go out of the common road, and forces one to find as many excuses as if it was a thing altogether criminal not to play the fool in concert with other women of quality, whose birth and leisure only serve to render them the most useless and most worthless part of the creation. There is hardly a character in the world more despicable, or more liable to universal ridicule, than that of a learned woman: those words imply, according to the received sense, a tattling, impertinent, vain, and conceited creature. I believe nobody will deny that learning may have this effect, but it must be a very superficial degree of it. Erasmus was certainly a man of great learning and good sense, and he seems to have my opinion of it when he says, *Fœmina qui* (sic) *vere sapit, non videtur sibi sapere; contra, quœ cum nihil sapiat sibi videtur sapere ea demum bis stulta est.* The Abbé Bellegarde gives a right reason for women's talking overmuch: they know nothing, and every outward object strikes their imagination, and produces a multitude of thoughts, which, if they knew more, they would know not worth their thinking of. I am not now arguing for an equality of the two sexes. I do not doubt God and nature have thrown us into an inferior rank; we are a lower part of the creation, we owe obedience and submission to the superior sex, and any woman who suffers her vanity and folly to deny this, rebels against the law of the Creator, and indisputable order of nature: but there is a worse effect than this, which follows the careless education given to women of quality, its being so easy for any man of sense, that finds it either his interest or his pleasure, to corrupt them.[1]

In 1712 Lady Mary married Mr. Wortley Montagu, in 1713 her son was born, and in 1715 she started with her husband on

[1] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. II, p. 5.

their journey to Turkey. The six years between the *Enchiridion* and the Embassy present Lady Mary to us in an enviable position. The reputation of her youth was augmented. "The wittiest as well as one of the most beautiful women of her day, she numbered among her admirers the most powerful of the statesmen, and the most brilliant of the *littérateurs;* while, for a time at least she was a favourite at the rival Courts of the King and the Prince of Wales." [1] The only literary output of this period is a long, rather stilted and perfunctory criticism of Addison's *Cato* which she undertook at her husband's request,[2] and some *Court Poems* which she wrote with great zest, in conjunction with Pope and Gay, in pursuance of Gay's plan to ridicule the pastoral by keeping the form, but making it the vehicle of corrupt court and town life. Of the seven poems so written four were by Lady Mary. In them we come for the first time on her power of combining picturesque detail and caustic comment. Not Gay himself was richer in local color; and Pope and Swift were almost equaled in contemptuous social portraiture.

During the six years before the Embassy Lady Mary's activities were essentially those of a social leader and the mistress of a household. But all her interests were focused to one point when she found that she could go to Turkey with Mr. Montagu. Travel "is the thing on earth I most wish," she had written in 1710, and now that her husband was sent as Ambassador to the Porte, her dreams could be realized. She must have been a perfect traveling companion. She had great courage, great endurance; no hardships or dangers daunted her. During the fifteen months of their absence she had her three-year-old son to care for, and her daughter was born while they were in Constantinople, but nothing interfered with her zest for experiences. Each day was a new adventure. Each day her insatiable desire to learn and to know some new thing received

[1] Symonds, Emily Morse: *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Her Times,* p. 201.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 169.

some new satisfaction. During the journey she kept a full diary which, though not published till after her death, became known in manuscript soon after her return. Certainly by 1725 she had prepared a copy with an eye to publication. To this manuscript Mary Astell wrote a Preface, signed "M. A.," and dated 1725. Mary Astell was twenty-two years older than Lady Mary for whom she had a strong personal affection, as well as a very sincere pride in her reputation as a learned woman. The Preface would seem to indicate that Lady Mary's "enviers" and "enemies" had not decreased since her girlhood days:

> In short [says Mary Astell] let her own sex, at least, do her justice; lay aside diabolical Envy, and its brother Malice, with all their accursed company, sly whispering, cruel backbiting, spiteful detraction, and the rest of that hideous crew, which, I hope, are very falsely said to attend the *Tea-Table*, being more apt to think they attend those public places where virtuous women never come. Let the men malign one another, if they think fit, and strive to pull down merit, when they cannot equal it. Let us be better-natured, than to give way to any unkind or disrespectful thought of so bright an ornament of our sex merely because she has better sense; for I doubt not but our hearts will tell us, that this is the real and unpardonable offense, whatever may be pretended. Let us be better Christians, than to look upon her with an evil eye, only because the Giver of all good gifts has entrusted and adorned her with the most excellent talents. Rather let us freely own the superiority of this sublime genius, as I do in the sincerity of my soul, pleased that a woman triumphs, and proud to follow in her train. Let us offer her the palm which is so justly her due; and if we pretend to any laurels, lay them willingly at her feet.

After Lady Mary's return to England in 1718 we come upon a long period of quiescence. Domestic affairs, events of social and political life, her friendships and hatreds, her economies and stock speculations, completely occupied her. During the first part of this period she was extravagantly praised. Steele said of her in his essay on Inoculation:

> This ornament of her Sex and Country, who ennobles her own Nobility by her Learning, Wit and Virtues, accompanying her consort into Turkey, observed the Benefit of this Practice, with its frequency, even

among these obstinate Predestinarians, and brought it over for the service and safety of her native England, where she consecrated its first effects on the persons of her own fine children.

In 1720 Pope wrote

> In beauty and wit
> No Mortal as yet
> To question your empire has dared:
> But men of discerning
> Have thought that in learning
> To yield to a lady was hard.
>
> Impertinent schools,
> With musty dull rules,
> Have reading to females denied;
> So Papists refuse
> The Bible to use,
> Lest flocks should be wise as their guide.
> . . . . . .
> But if the first Eve
> Hard doom did receive
> When only one apple had she,
> What a punishment new
> Shall be found out for you,
> Who, tasting, have robbed the whole tree.

And in 1727 he wrote in *Sandys' Ghost*:

> Ye ladies, too, draw forth your pen,
> I pray where can the hurt lie?
> Since you have brains as well as men,
> As witness Lady Wortley.

Before 1724 Dr. Young had sent her his tragedy *The Brothers*, requesting her criticism. In 1725 Richard Savage dedicated his *Miscellanies* to her as one through whose elevated and immortal wit England had been honored, and who had firmly established the fact that women have "strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness." And Henry Fielding, her second cousin, sent her his comedies, "exceedingly anxious" for her opinion of them.

But after 1724 or 1725 the years seem to slip on in an aimless fashion, the only breaks in the monotony coming from the intermittently virulent quarrels with Pope, the religious and medical animosities roused by the inoculation process, family sorrows and family discords, with no literary output to mark any personal achievements. From thirty to fifty should have been harvest years after so brilliant a beginning. But the early promise faded into a middle age disillusioned, unambitious, and rather commonplace. The only writing of any importance was in the correspondence kept up in a desultory fashion with various friends. Such of the letters of this period as have been preserved are so vivid and picturesque, so witty, and so pleasantly caustic in their comment, that we can only regret their small number. Take for instance the following description of a feminine riot in the House of Commons:

At the last warm debate in the House of Lords, it was unanimously resolved there should be no crowd of unnecessary auditors; consequently the fair sex were excluded, and the gallery destined to the sole use of the House of Commons. Notwithstanding which determination, a tribe of dames resolved to show on this occasion that neither men nor laws could resist them. These heroines were Lady Huntington, the Duchess of Queensberry, the Duchess of Ancaster, Lady Westmoreland, Lady Cobham, Lady Charlotte Edwin, Lady Archibald Hamilton, and her daughter, Mrs. Scott, and Mrs. Pendarves, and Lady Frances Saunderson. I am thus particular in their names, since I look upon them to be the boldest asserters, and most resigned sufferers for liberty, I ever read of. They presented themselves at the door at nine o'clock in the morning, where Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them the Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensberry, as head of the squadron, pished at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer, and desired him to let them upstairs privately. After some modest refusals, he swore by G—— he would not let them in. Her grace, with a noble warmth, answered, by G—— they would come in in spite of the Chancellor and the whole House. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out; an order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed themselves qualified for the duty even of foot soldiers; they stood there till five in the afternoon, without either sustenance or evacuation, every now and then playing volleys of thumps, kicks, and raps

against the door, with so much violence that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the two duchesses (very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a dead silence of half an hour; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence (the Commons also being very impatient to enter), gave order for the opening of the door; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery. They stayed there till after eleven, when the House rose; and during the debate gave applause and showed marks of dislike, not only by smiles and winks (which have always been allowed in these cases), but by noisy laughs and apparent contempts; which is supposed the true reason why poor Lord Hervey spoke miserably.[1]

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[1] *Letters and Works*, vol. II, p. 41. The debate referred to was on the conduct of the Spanish government, and took place on Thursday, March 1, 1739. Mrs. Pendarves, afterwards Mrs. Delany, gives the following slightly different account of the matter: "Lady Westmoreland . . . and the Duchess of Queensberry, Mrs. Fortescue and myself, set forward for Westminster, and got up to the gallery door without any difficulty. There were thirteen ladies more that came with the same intention. To tell you all the particulars of our provocations, the insults of the doorkeepers and our unshaken intrepidity, would flourish out more paper than a single frank would contain; but we bore the buffets of a stinking crowd from half an hour after ten till five in the afternoon without moving an inch from our places, only see-sawing about as the motion of the multitude forced us. At last, our committee resolved to adjourn to the coffee-house of the Court of Request, where debates began how we were to proceed? It was agreed amongst us to address Sir Charles Dalton (gentleman usher of the Black Rod) for admittance. The address was presented, and an answer returned that whilst one lady remained in the passage to the gallery, the door should not be opened for the members of the House of Commons, so we generously gave them the liberty of taking their places. As soon as the door was opened, they all rushed in, and we followed."

It is of interest to compare the events of this attack on the House of Lords with two similar attempts to affect legislative action in the seventeenth century. In 1643, when some peace propositions had been under consideration in the House of Commons, but had been finally abandoned, the women of London, with white silk ribbons in their hats, went in great numbers to the House bearing a peace petition. The House sent out a deputation of three or four members to meet them, mollify them, and induce them to return home. Rushworth recounts the further progress of the affair:

"But the women, not satisfied, remain'd thereabouts, and by noon were encreased to five thousand at the least; and some men of the rabble in women's cloaths mixt themselves amongst them and instigated them to go to the Commons door and cry 'Peace, Peace,' which they did accordingly, thrusting to the door of the House at the upper stairs head; and as soon as they were pass'd a

In 1739 Lady Mary drifted, without settled plan, to Italy, and there her self-elected exile lengthened itself insensibly into a habit of absence, so that she did not return to England till 1761, the year before her death. During this period she kept a full journal, and projected other work, but brought nothing to fruition.[1] Her chief occupation was reading. Her voracious appetite for fiction passed over from her girlhood absorption in French romances to the novels crowding the presses of the mid-eighteenth century. The events of her placid life were boxes of books from England, and the novels she read would make an adequate list even for Polly Honeycomb. Lady Orford said she wondered how any one could find pleasure in the books Lady Mary chose. But Lady Mary confessed herself "a rake in reading," and said, in 1750: "I thank God my taste still continues for the gay part of reading. Wiser people may think it trifling but it serves to sweeten life to me." [2] In 1752 her daughter sent her *Peregrine Pickle* (1751), Lady Vane's *Memoirs* (1750), *The Fortunate Parish Girl* (1750), *Pompey the Little* (1751), *Eleanora's Adventures* (1751) and the *Life of Mrs.*

part of the Trained Band (that usually stood sentinal there) thrust the soldiers down and would suffer none to come in or go out of the House for near two hours. The Trained Band advised them to come down, and first pulled them; and, afterwards to fright them shot powder. But they cry'd out 'Nothing but powder,' and having brickbats in the yard threw them apace at the Trained Band, who then shot bullets, and killed a ballad-singer with one arm that was heartening on the women, and another poor man that came accidentally. Yet the women not daunted, cry'd out the louder at the door of the House of Commons, 'Give us these traitors that are against peace that we may tear them to pieces, give us that dog Pym.' "

This "Female Riot" had a disastrous end. When Waller's troopers went by with his colors in their hats, the women snatched some of the ribbons, calling the men Waller's dogs. The troopers defended themselves, at first with swords "flatways," but later cutting so furiously over hands and faces that most of the women fled. The few who remained were later dispersed by a troop of horses.

[1] On her return she brought nineteen volumes of this journal which she entrusted to her daughter. Lady Bute kept them under lock and key, occasionally reading passages from them, and once allowing her daughter, Lady Louisa, to read the first portions. Before Lady Bute's death the manuscript was solemnly burned as a sacred duty to her mother's memory.

[2] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. II, p. 211 n.

Constantia Philips, as among the interesting new books. In a letter to Lady Bute Lady Mary wrote:

> I see in the newspapers the names of the following books: Fortunate Mistress, Accomplished Rake, Mrs. Charke's Memoirs, Modern Lovers, History of Two Orphans, Memoirs of David Ranger, Miss [Mos]tyn, Dick Hazard, History of a Lady Platonist, Sophia Shakespear, Jasper Banks, Frank Hammond, Sir Andrew Thompson, Van a Clergyman's Son, Cleanthes and Celimena. I do not doubt at least the greatest part of these are trash, lumber, etc.; however, they will serve to pass away the idle time, if you will be so kind to send them to your most affectionate mother.[1]

And she read English drama from *Gammer Gurton's Needle* to Lillo's *George Barnwell*, her prime favorite.[2]

During the twenty-two years in Italy Lady Mary was practically alone, but she says time never hung heavy on her hands. She wrote letters constantly, and her interest never flagged in the affairs of England in general and of Lady Bute's family in particular. As the daughters grew up, Lady Mary wrote often about their education, and we see that the ideas of the letter to Bishop Burnet persist. In 1753 she wrote concerning Lady Mary, the eldest granddaughter, who had shown herself excellent in arithmetic:

> Learning, if she has a real taste for it, will not only make her contented, but happy in it. No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions, nor regret the loss of expensive diversions, or variety of company, if she can be amused with an author in her closet. To render this amusement extensive, she should be permitted to learn the languages. I have heard it lamented that boys lose so many years in mere learning of words: this is no objection to a girl, whose time is not so precious: she cannot advance herself in any profession, and has therefore more hours to spare; and as you say her memory is good, she will be very agreeably employed in this way. There are two cautions to be given on this subject: first, not to think herself learned when she can read Latin, or even Greek. Languages are more properly to be called vehicles of learning than learning itself, as may be observed in many schoolmasters, who, though perhaps critics in grammar, are the most ignorant fellows on

[1] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. II, p. 314. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. cxxvii.

earth. True knowledge consists in knowing things, not words. I would wish her no further a linguist than to enable her to read books in their originals, that are often corrupted, and always injured by translations. Two hours application every morning will bring this about much sooner than you can imagine, and she will have leisure enough besides to run over the English poetry, which is a more important part of a woman's education than it is generally supposed. . . . If she has the same inclination (I should say passion) for learning that I was born with, history, geography, and philosophy will furnish her with materials to pass away cheerfully a longer life than is allotted to mortals. I believe there are few heads capable of making Sir I. Newton's calculations, but the result of them is not difficult to be understood by a moderate capacity. Do not fear this should make her affect the character of Lady ——, of Lady ——, or Mrs. ——: These women are ridiculous, not because they have learning, but because they have it not. One thinks herself a complete historian, after reading Echard's Roman History; another a profound philosopher, having got by heart some of Pope's unintelligible essays; and a third an able divine, on the strength of Whitfield's sermons: thus you hear them screaming politics and controversy.[1]

In the next letter Lady Mary shows some doubt as to the wisdom of giving advice so outspoken on the subject of learning. She says:

I cannot help writing a sort of apology for my last letter, foreseeing that you will think it wrong, or at least Lord Bute will be extremely shocked at the proposal of a learned education for daughters, which the generality of men believe as great a profanation as the clergy would do if the laity should presume to exercise the functions of the priesthood. I desire you would take notice, I would not have learning enjoined them as a task, but permitted as a pleasure, if their genius leads them naturally to it.[2]

Later in the same letter she says:

There is nothing so like the education of a woman of quality as that of a prince: they are taught to dance, and the exterior part of what is called good breeding, which, if they attain, they are extraordinary creatures in their kind, and have all the accomplishments required by their directors. The same characters are formed by the same lessons, which inclines me to think (if I dare say it) that nature has not placed us in an inferior rank to men, no more than the females of other ani-

[1] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. II, p. 236. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 239.

mals, where we see no distinction of capacity; though, I am persuaded, if there was a commonwealth of rational horses (as Doctor Swift has supposed), it would be an established maxim among them, that a mare could not be taught to pace.

In October of the same year she wrote further on the subject of the learned woman:

I confess I have often been complimented, since I have been in Italy, on the books I have given the public. I used at first to deny it with some warmth; but, finding I persuaded nobody, I have of late contented myself with laughing whenever I heard it mentioned, knowing the character of a learned woman is far from being ridiculous in this country, the greatest families being proud of having produced female writers; and a Milanese lady being now professor of mathematics in the University of Bologna, invited thither by a most obliging letter, wrote by the present Pope, who desired her to accept of the chair, not as a recompense for her merit, but to do honor to a town which is under his protection. To say truth, there is no part of the world where our sex is treated with so much contempt as in England. I do not complain of men for having engrossed the government: in excluding us from all degrees of power, they preserve us from many fatigues, many dangers, and perhaps many crimes. The small proportion of authority that has fallen to my share (only over a few children and servants) always has been a burden and never a pleasure, and I believe every one finds it so who acts from a maxim (I think an indispensable duty), that whoever is under my power is under my protection. Those who find a joy in inflicting hardships and seeing objects of misery, may have other sensations; but I have always thought corrections, even when necessary, as painful to the giver as to the sufferer, and am therefore very well satisfied with the state of subjection we are placed in: but I think it the highest injustice to be debarred the entertainment of my closet, and that the same studies which raise the character of a man should hurt that of a woman. We are educated in the grossest ignorance, and no art omitted to stifle our natural reason; if some few get above their nurse's instructions, our knowledge must rest concealed, and be as useless to the world as gold in a mine. I am speaking now according to our English notions, which may wear out, some ages hence, along with others equally absurd.[1]

Lady Montagu died in London in 1762. Her *Turkish Letters* were published the next year. Her miscellaneous correspond-

[1] Montagu, Lady Mary: *Works*, vol. II, p. 252.

ence came out in 1807. Nor was her real significance apparent until both publications were accessible. It was then at once recognized that no English letter-writer had surpassed Lady Mary in brilliancy and wit. Her eye was so quick and accurate that no interesting details of dress or manner escaped her. As a chronicler and critic of social faults and foibles she was cool, keen, merciless. She was graphic in phrase, homely and direct in figures of speech, racy and idiomatic. The whole tone of her writing was free, lively, energetic, and she could make any topic entertaining. As a person there seems to be ground for two opposite opinions concerning Lady Mary. People admired her and praised her, or they hated her and told scandalous stories about her. But as a writer there could be but one opinion. She was not the first woman of letters to be eulogized, but she was the first woman, not in fiction or drama, whose writings every one wished to read.

Mrs. De la Rivière Manley (1672-1724)

Mrs. Manley,[1] a gentlewoman of good family, the daughter of Sir Roger Manley, was left an orphan while still young. Her guardian, a cousin twenty years older than herself, tricked her into a false marriage, and then, on the birth of a child, announced the cheat and disappeared. Most of the fortune left by her father had also vanished. The details of her life after this until she began her career of authorship are but vaguely known. In 1696 she made a threefold appeal to the public in *Letters written by Mrs. Manley;*[2] *The Lost Lover*, a comedy written in seven days, produced at Drury Lane, and not successful; and *The Royal Mischief*, successfully brought out at Lincoln's Inn Fields. In the Preface to her *Letters* (1696) Mrs. Manley spoke of the eager contention between the theaters as to which should bring her on the stage, but drama was not her natural medium. When, after a silence of nine years, she again appeared as an author, it was with *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705),

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. IV, pp. 4–22.

[2] Reprinted in 1725 as *A Stage Coach Journey to Exeter.*

a precursor of the scandalous personal and political memories for which she became known. In 1709 she published *Secret Memoirs and Manners of several Persons of Quality of Both Sexes. From the New Atalantis, an Island in the Mediterranean.* The popularity of this book brought a second volume the same year. In 1710 appeared *Memoirs of Europe towards the Close of the Eighth Century.* This and a second volume were afterwards reprinted as the third and fourth volumes of *The New Atalantis.* The sixth edition of *The New Atalantis* had a *Key* at the end of the fourth volume.

This book purported to be by an Italian and put into English by an anonymous translator. The plan of the romance is that of a journey where Astræa (Mrs. Behn revisiting the earth), Fame, and Virtue are conducted invisibly about while their guide, "Intelligence," tells them the secret histories of the persons they meet. Under this thin disguise the statesmen, wits, and beauties of the reign of William and Mary and Queen Anne were at once recognized. Mrs. Manley, the publisher, and the printer, were arrested. On her own testimony, however, the blame was counted hers and she was examined before the court, but after about three months she was discharged. And the later volumes followed with no public expression of disapproval.

In 1711 Mrs. Manley succeeded Swift as editor of *The Examiner.* In 1714 appeared *The Adventures of Rivella, or, the History of the Author of Atalantis, by Sir Charles Lovemore.* In 1724 Curll brought this out as *Mrs. Manley's History of Her own Life and Times,* and it was probably written by her. In 1720 *The Power of Love in Seven Volumes,* and *Verses,* in Anthony Hammond's *New Miscellany,* close her contributions to literature. She died at the house of Alderman Barker whose mistress she had been for several years.

A fact of central interest about Mrs. Manley's personal and literary career is her quarrel with Steele which kept up with long lulls and acrimonious crises from before 1709 to 1717. In the first volume of *The New Atalantis* [1] she gave an account

[1] Vol. I, pp. 205–13.

of Steele as "Monsieur le Ingrate," narrating in detail her aid in rescuing him from the impostors who were leading him into ruinous expenses in search of the philosopher's stone, and bitterly assailing him for his later ingratitude in the time of her own distresses. In the same year *The Tatler*, No. 35, possibly referred to Mrs. Manley under the description of the snuff-eating lady. Certainly in September Swift represented her, under the name of "Epicene," as one of the professors in Madonella's college. Mrs. Manley, assuming that the paper was by Steele, wrote a denunciatory letter, which he answered in mild fashion, owning his former indebtedness to her and explaining his inability to aid her when she appealed to him. In the third and fourth volumes of *The New Atalantis* (1710) were further attacks on Steele.[1] This third volume was dedicated to him as "Isaac Bickerstaffe." She quoted his letter, but omitted some of the mitigating sentences. Of the "mighty Tatlers" leveled at her she says: "A weak, unlearn'd Woman's Writings, to employ so great a Pen! Heavens? how valuable am I? How fond of that *Immortality*, even of *Infamy*, that you have promised! I am ravished at the Thoughts of *living a Thousand Years hence* in your indelible lines, tho' to *give Offence*. . . . I shall be proud of furnishing Matter towards your inexhaustible *Tatler*, and of being a perpetual Monument of Mr. Bickerstaffe's Gallantry and Morality."

In August, 1713, (*The Guardian*, No. 128), Steele entered the controversy concerning the demolition of Dunkirk. Mrs. Manley answered with a pamphlet in which the "honour and Prerogative of the Queen's Majesty" were defended "against the unexampled Insolence of the Author of the Guardian." This closed the open hostilities, and by 1717 there were handsome apologies and frank admissions of error on both sides, and the reconciliation seems to have been complete. The chief interest we find in Mrs. Manley's play is the fact that Steele wrote the Prologue and that the play was dedicated to him.

[1] Vol. IV, pp. 302–07. (Conversation between Steele as "Don Phœbo" and Mrs. Tofts.)

In this Dedication she said, "I have not known a greater mortification than when I have reflected upon the severities which have flowed from a pen which is now, you see, disposed to celebrate and commend you." [1]

Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas (1677-1731)

Dryden conferred upon Mrs. Thomas the title of "Corinna" and says, "I would have called you Sapho, but that I hear you are handsomer." The young poetess had received no regular education, but she improved her mind by reading the politest authors, and finally, at twenty-two, she ventured forth as a poet herself. She sent two poems to Mr. Dryden asking his critical judgment of them. He responded with the following letter:

Fair Corinna,

I have sent your two poems back again, after having kept them so long from you: They were I thought too good to be a woman's; some of my friends to whom I read them, were of the same opinion. It is not very gallant I must confess to say this of the fair sex; but, most certain it is, they generally write with more softness than strength. On the contrary, you want neither vigour in your thoughts, nor force in your expression, nor harmony in your numbers; and methinks, I find much of Orinda in your manner, (to whom I had the honour to be related, and also to be known) but I am so taken up with my own studies, that I have not leisure to descend to particulars, being in the meantime, the fair Corinna's

Most humble, and
Most faithful servant
JOHN DRYDEN.

Nov. 12, 1699.

The poetical career thus auspiciously begun with the praise of the great poet ended in disaster. After the death of Mr. Gwinnet, who had courted her for sixteen years, in 1717, and of her mother in 1719, she was always in financial straits and used almost any means to avoid her creditors. During the time when she was living under the protection of Mr. Henry Cromwell, she gained possession of twenty-five letters written to him by Mr. Pope. These she sold to Curll, who published them

[1] *The Tatler* (ed. Aitkin), vol. IV, p. 242 n.

in 1726, and she thus gained a disgraceful place in *The Dunciad*. Her *Poems* were published in 1722, 1726, 1727, but she does not seem to have been rewarded with either fame or money. Besides other unimportant literary work she wrote an autobiography entitled *Pylades and Corinna; or, Memoirs of the Lives, Amours, and Writings of Richard Gwinnet, Esquire, and Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, junior. . . . To which is prefixed the Life of Corinna, written by herself*. This was published in 1731 in two volumes. The autobiography in an abridged form appears in Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*.[1]

Mrs. Eliza Haywood (1693-1756)

Miss Eliza Fowler, the daughter of a small shopkeeper in London, was married before she was twenty to the Reverend Valentine Haywood.[2] In 1721 she left her husband[3] and thereafter she had her own way to make. A few unimportant attempts as an actress[4] and some occasional unsuccessful attempts as a playwright may be set aside as not belonging to her real career. It was as a writer of romantic tales and novels that she achieved success. This vein once tapped, the ore, such as it was, seemed inexhaustible. From 1719 to 1756 Mrs. Haywood published about seventy single works, nearly all of them "fictitious tales."[5] If we should count various editions, the numbers of times she was privileged to see some work by her

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*, vol. IV, pp. 146–63.

[2] Whicher, George Frisbie: *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood* (Columbia, 1915), p. 2.

[3] "Whereas Elizabeth Haywood, Wife of the Reverend Mr. Valentine Haywood, eloped from him her Husband on Saturday the 26th. of November last past, and went away without his Knowledge and Consent: This is to give Notice to all persons in general, That if any one shall trust her either with Money or Goods, or if she shall contract Debts of any kind whatsoever, the said Mr. Haywood will not pay the same." (*Post Boy*, January 7, 1721. Quoted by Mr. Whicher, p. 3.)

[4] In 1723, at Drury Lane, she played "Mrs. Graspall" in her own comedy, *A Wife to be Lett*. In 1715, six years before she left her husband, she had appeared as "Chloe" in Shadwell's adaptation of *Timon of Athens*.

[5] A complete bibliography of Mrs. Haywood's works is given by Mr. Whicher in his *Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, pp. 126–204.

issue from the press during her thirty-seven years of authorship would exceed one hundred and fifty. Her most prolific years were 1724 to 1728, thirty-three new books appearing during this short time.

This crowding of book after book through the press, the numerous editions of the more popular novels, and the fact that four "Collections" of her works had appeared by 1729, sufficiently attest her extraordinary contemporary popularity. Mrs. Haywood's fecundity is not a matter for great surprise. It is easy to understand that if she could write one novel like *Love in Excess*, she could write half a hundred more without seriously taxing her creative spirit. But to the present-day reader her popularity seems incredible. Of what sort was the reading public that stimulated her and her publishers to such activity? According to Mr. Gosse's conjecture in "What Ann Lang Read," "Eliza was read by servants in the kitchen, by seamstresses, by basket-women, by prentices of all sorts, male and female, but chiefly the latter." [1] But Mr. Whicher points out that Mrs. Haywood's novels were never issued in cheap form, and that one to three shillings for a slender octavo would put the books beyond the purses of the servant class.[2] In all probability Ann Lang, the milliner's apprentice, is less truly representative of Mrs. Haywood's readers than is Polly in Colman's *Polly Honeycomb* (1760). Polly did not begin her career as a novel-reader till more than a decade after the appearance of *Pamela*, so that a fairly wide range of fiction was open to her, and Mrs. Haywood could be but one element of her possible literary joys. But we know that *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* was one of her favorites, and the extracts she gives from Mrs. Haywood's previous novels and the names she cherishes, read like satires on that lady's heroics. If Polly may be counted as typical of Mrs. Haywood's public, we have readers distinctly above the servant class. Mr. Honeycomb was a

[1] Gosse, Edmund: *Gossip in a Library*; "What Ann Lang Read," pp. 161–69.

[2] Whicher: *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, p. 13.

well-to-do tradesman with clerks in the office and a fairly elaborate domestic establishment. Polly may even have been to a finishing school. There are also indications of a class of readers higher still. The ladies of fashion who so attentively pursued Mrs. Manley's *New Atalantis* could hardly be supposed indifferent to the social scandal in Mrs. Haywood's *Memoirs of a Certain Island* and *The Court of Carimania*. In Leonora's library there was a *Book of Novels* which would doubtless appeal to the same taste as Mrs. Haywood's tales. Furthermore, the impassioned protests against novel-reading in all didactic addresses to young ladies would indicate a widespread devotion to fiction in the higher social ranks.

Mrs. Haywood's popularity was certainly contributed to by a lack of important competitors. Before the advent of *Pamela* the young girl eager for stories must read French romances, Defoe's novels, or Mrs. Haywood's novels. Defoe was not particularly attractive to the Pollys of the age, and the taste for the many-volumed romances, beloved of ladies from Dorothy Osborne and Mrs. Pepys to Biddy Tipkin and Arabella,[1] was gradually dying out. So Mrs. Haywood had her chance. Her "little Performances," as she called them, offered in brief compass the love and adventure of the long romance without its tax on the reader's patience.

Mrs. Haywood's short romances have but one theme. "Eliza writes, but Love alone inspires," is a correct analysis by one of her admirers. She is the self-appointed chronicler of Love and all its attendant passions. She sets herself to trace "The Wild Career of untamed Love in the proud Heart of Arbitrary Man"; to note the thrilling ardors, the languishments, the ecstasies and violent agitations on the part of the adored one; to depict with extravagant emphasis the jealousy, rage, despair, of disappointed affections. These experiences of the heart take place in the midst of adventures of the most melodramatic sort. Flights over land and sea are complicated by storms and shipwreck, by bandits and pirates. The heroic play

[1] See section on "Novel-Reading Girl."

itself is less prolific in elopements, seductions, duels, murders, and suicides. The sword, the dagger, and the poison cup play an active part in cutting Gordian knots too intricately tied. There is small effort to make the story probable. The whole effort is to make it exciting. The reader is plunged from adventure to adventure with no breathing place in which to be critical, and it is by this headlong speed that the attention is held. But after reading several of the tales it becomes apparent that to know one is to know all. The passions, the situations, the obstacles, the dénouements recur. Nor are the people differentiated. The ardent lovers, their yielding or temporarily obdurate fair ones, the jealous lovers and mistresses, hard-hearted fathers, faithless friends, and mercenary confidants, make up the personnel of each story. Among the hundreds of characters there is not one that remains in the memory as a real person. They are but puppets through whose convulsive starts and unnatural tones Mrs. Haywood vainly endeavors to make genuine passion speak.

Nor have these novels any additional points of interest such as might come from witty dialogue, pungent comment, or beautiful description. Mrs. Haywood's English is fluent, intelligible, and fairly correct, but it never attains distinction. The total effect of these tales of passion is one of almost stupefying dullness and monotony. It is painful to reflect on the blunted moral, emotional, and æsthetic sensibilities of a generation of readers who found their solace in *The Excess of Love* and its congeners.

Mrs. Haywood's activities suffered something of a check after 1729, possibly owing to the savage attacks on her by Pope in *The Dunciad* (1728).[1] At any rate, for some reason or combination of reasons, no new original works of any importance by her appeared between 1729 and 1751. Among various expedients to earn a livelihood during this period the most notable is her attempt to establish herself as a publisher in 1742, but

[1] Whicher, G. F.: *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, chap. v, "The Heroine of *The Dunciad*."

since only two books are recorded as published by her she probably quickly found herself without the business training for such an enterprise.[1] A more notable undertaking is *The Female Spectator* edited and at least partly written by Mrs. Haywood in April, 1744–May, 1746.

She entered again the field of authorship with her best novels, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, in four volumes (1751), and *The History of Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy*, three volumes (1752), which have the merit of faintly foreshadowing the domestic novel of a later day.[2]

The paper is professedly modeled on the work of Addison and Steele. The writing purports to be by an editorial group of four ladies with Mrs. Haywood as editor-in-chief. A vivacious widow in whom lovers confide; Euphrosine, so called because of her brightness and charm; and Mira, a lady of hereditary wit, complete the quadrumvirate. Their avowed purpose is to give entertaining items of news, discuss dress, decorum, and social foibles in friendly admonition, and analyze the human heart. But there is no real emphasis except on the last of these topics. The Tenderillas, Claribellas, Elismondas, Dorindas, and the rest, pursue their amorous way from volume to volume, unconscious that the world holds any interest but love, that "noblest, softest, and the best" of all the passions.

But now and then the editors or some contributor break out

[1] Whicher, G. F.: *The Life and Romances of Mrs. Eliza Haywood*, p. 22. It may be noticed that late in the century several women were successful printers and publishers. "Mrs. Munelly was a printer in White Fryars; and publisher of *The St. James's Evening Post*, a very old newspaper, the precursor of *The St. James's Chronicle*" (Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. III, p. 467.) "In April, 1775, Mrs. Baskerville, who had carried on the printing business of her husband, announced that business for sale, but she continued the business of letter founding in all its parts." (*Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 459.) "William Caslon, whose foundry was of great repute, died in 1778, leaving the business to his widow. Her merit and ability in conducting a capital business during the life of her husband, and afterwards till her son was capable of managing it, can only be known to those who had dealings with that manufacturer. In quickness of understanding, and activity of execution, she has left few equals among her sex." (*Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 357.)

[2] *Ibid.*, chap. 7, "The Domestic Novel."

THE SUPPOSED EDITORS OF *THE FEMALE SPECTATOR*
BY MRS. ELIZA HAYWOOD

From Vol. I of the seventh edition, 1771
Mrs. Haywood is the scribe; the lady in black is the vivacious widow of quality; the lady standing is "Euphrosine"; the other lady is "Mira"

of the charmed circle, and we get a glimpse of women who, along with their overworked hearts, have at least rudimentary minds. A certain "Cleora" urges that women's best qualities are often stifled by a wrong education, and that "the world would infallibly be happier than it is if women were more knowing than they generally are." The studies suggested are history, geography, some of the more agreeable parts of mathematics, and "Enchanting Philosophy, its path strewd with Roses." Music, poetry, dancing, and novels are suggested by way of relaxation. For solid reading the recommendation includes translations of Latin historians and French books of travel, and closes with *Bailey's Dictionary*, "a library of itself since there was never person, place or action of any note, from the creation down to the time of its being published, but what it gives a general account of." In another essay "Philo-Naturæ" spends impassioned pages urging ladies to study natural history, but nullifies her eloquence by the narrow limit she assigns to their work. "It is easy to see, that it is not my ambition to render my sex what is called deeply-learned." Women need only "a kind of general understanding" of science, such as will enable them to take an agreeable part in conversation. They are not called to abstruse and difficult researches, but merely to those light and charming observations that catch the watchful eye on little excursions such as ladies make in fields, meadows, and gardens.

In *The Wife* (1755) Mrs. Haywood is less liberal than in *The Spectator*. The married lady is particularly warned against the dangers of an active mind or speculative disposition. She may be so misguided as to "attempt to investigate those things that Heaven has hidden from human understanding," in which case her brain will be distracted by books of controversy. Or she may strangely busy her mind about the planets, wondering whether those vast and luminous orbs are habitable, and if so, whether possessed by men or angels or the ghosts of the departed. A lady so fantastically engaged is likely to waste her time over such books as Fontanelle's *Plurality of Worlds*.

A woman who once gets either of these fancies into her head, is lost to everything besides; her husband, children, family, friends, acquaintances, with all the necessary avocations and duties of her station, seem altogether unworthy her regard; she lives in the clouds, and it is with difficulty she is dragg'd down to the performance of anything requir'd of her below.

Methinks it is down-right madness to waste any part of time in seeking after things impossible to be attain'd; or if attain'd could be of no real service: — a married woman, above all others, should avoid this error: — it best becomes her to center her whole studies within the compass of her own walls, — to enquire no farther than into the humours and inclinations of her husband and children, to the end she may know how to oblige those she finds in him, and rectify whatever is amiss in them, and not attempt to extend her speculations beyond her family, and those things which are entrusted to her management.

Mrs. Haywood's programme reads like a combination from Molière's Chrysal and Mrs. Barbauld.

In 1729 Swift wrote from Dublin to Pope:

There are three citizens' wives in this town; one of them whose name is Grierson, a Scotch book-seller's wife. She is a very good Latin and Greek scholar, and has lately published a fine edition of Tacitus, with a Latin dedication to the Lord Lieutenant; and she writes *Carmina Anglicana non Contemnenda*. The second is one Mrs. Barber, wife to a woolen draper, who is our chief poetess, and, upon the whole, has no ill genius. I fancy I have mentioned her to you formerly. The last is the bearer hereof, and the wife of a surly rich husband, who checks her vein; whereas Mrs. Grierson is only well to pass, and Mrs. Barber, as it becomes the chief poetess, is but poor. The bearer's name is Sykins. She has a very good taste of poetry, has read much, and, as I hear, has writ one or two things with applause, which I never saw, except about six lines she sent me unknown, with a piece of sturgeon, some years ago, on my birthday. Can you show such a triumfeminate in London?[1]

Mrs. Mary Barber (1690?-1757)

Soon after Swift added Mrs. Pilkington to his list of Dublin writers, but it still remains a triumfeminate, because we hear no more of Mrs. Sykins, the surly rich husband having apparently been successful in checking her vein. Her proposed visit to

[1] Pope, Alexander: *Works* (Elwin and Courthope), vol. VII, p. 177.

Pope was also a failure. She went to Twickenham and delivered Swift's letter, but, for some unknown reason, returned to London two hours before the time Pope had appointed to receive her. His irritation found expression in the reference to "an Irish poetess" as among his troublesome visitors in one version of *The Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.*[1]

Mrs. Mary Barber would hardly be so much as a name today were it not for Swift. He first met her in about the year 1729, and from that time to 1736 letters to and from him have much to say concerning her career. She was then nearly forty, most of her poems existed in manuscript, she was already something of a celebrity in Dublin, and her one desire was a subscription publication of her work. In pursuance of this wish she went to London late in 1730 and Swift sent kindly letters in her behalf to several of his London friends. In the summer of 1731 a mysterious letter to the Queen, purporting to be from Swift, contained this passage: "Mrs. Barber, the best female poet of this or perhaps any age, is now in your majesty's capital; known to Lady Hertford, Lady Torrington, Lady Walpole, etc.; a woman whose genius is honoured by every man of genius in this kingdom, and either honoured or envied by every man of genius in England." [2] Pope sent a copy of this letter to Swift, who immediately and indignantly, in letters to Pope and the Countess of Suffolk, disavowed it. Such a letter, he said, would be "a folly so transcendent, that no man could be guilty of, who was not fit for Bedlam." In his letter to Pope Swift said of Mrs. Barber:

> Dr. Delany has been long her protector; and he, being many years my acquaintance, desired my good office for her, and brought her several times to the deanery. I knew she was poetically given, and, for a woman, had a sort of genius that way. She appeared very modest and pious, and I believe was sincere; and wholy turned to poetry. I did conceive her journey to England was on the score of her trade, being a woollen-draper, until Dr. Delany said, she had a design of

[1] Pope, Alexander: *Works* (Elwin and Courthope), vol. VII, p. 191; vol. III, p. 243.

[2] Swift, Jonathan: *Works* (ed. Scott), vol. XVII. p. 359.

printing her poems by subscription, and desired I would befriend her: which I did, chiefly by your means, the doctor still urging me on: upon whose request I writ to her two or three times, because she thought my countenancing her might be of use. Lord Carteret very much befriended her, and she seems to have made her way not ill.[1]

The perpetrator of the forged letter and the purpose in sending it to the Queen have never been discovered, but the irritation arising from it might well have destroyed Swift's interest in Mrs. Barber's subscription list. He apparently recognized, however, that she was innocent of offense and continued his efforts in her behalf. Dr. Arbuthnot writes that he has shown "as much civility as he could" to Mrs. Barber.[2] Gay has "made a visit to Mrs. Barber."[3] Lady Betty Germain says Mrs. Barber "goes on in her subscription very well."[4] But the list was incomplete by the summer of 1732 and dragged slowly on till 1734 in spite of the aid of Mr. Barber, Lord Mayor of London, Mrs. Worsley, Mrs. Cæsar, Mrs. Conduitt, Miss Kelly, Lord Carteret, Lord Orrery, and the Duchess of Queensberry, all of whom in response to applications from Swift wrote to him concerning the progress of Mrs. Barber's affairs. In 1733 Mrs. Conduitt wrote that "the town had already been so long invited into the subscription that most people had already refused or accepted."[5] It was not till 1734 that the list was considered long enough to make publication safe.

Swift crowned his service by writing a dedicatory letter to Lord Orrery. In this letter he spoke of Mrs. Barber as follows:

She desireth your protection on account of her wit and good sense, as well as of her humility, her gratitude, and many other virtues. I have read most of her poems; and believe your Lordship will observe, that they generally contain something new and useful, tending to the reproof of some vice or folly, or recommending some virtue. She never writes on a subject with general unconnected topics, but always with

[1] Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), vol. XVII, p. 367. Letter to Countess of Suffolk, p. 371.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, p. 306.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, p. 342.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, p. 353.

[5] *Ibid.*, vol. XVIII, p. 168.

a scheme and method driving to some particular end: wherein many writers in verse, and of some distinction, are so often known to fail. In short, she seemeth to have a true poetical genius, better cultivated than could be expected, either from her sex, or the scene she hath acted in, as the wife of a citizen. Yet I am assured, that no woman was ever more useful to her husband in the way of his business. Poetry hath only been her favorite amusement; for which she hath one qualification that I wish all good poets possess'd a share of; I mean, that she is ready to take advice, and submit to have her verse corrected, by those who are generally allow'd to be the best judges.[1]

But for the persistent efforts of Swift the subscription would never have been completed. Yet Mrs. Barber had gained incidentally such a retinue of supporting friends that her poems were republished in 1735 and 1736. There was apparently a touch of personal venom in the passage where Mrs. Pilkington chronicles the generous aid given Mrs. Barber and emphasizes the final small success of the poems:

Mrs. Barber . . . was at this time writing a volume of Poems, some of which I fancy might, at this Day, be seen in the Cheesemungers, Chandlers, Pastry-cooks, and Second-hand Book-sellers' Shops: However, dull as they were, they certainly would have been much worse, but that Dr. Delany frequently held what he called a *Senatus Consultum*, to correct these undigested materials; at which were present sometimes the Dean, (in the Chair) but always Mrs. Grierson, Mr. Pilkington, the Doctor, and myself.[2]

A poem in which they were summoned to one of these meetings began:

> Mighty *Thomas* a solemn *Senatus* I call,
> To consult for *Saphira*, so come one and all.

In 1736 Mrs. Barber was again in financial straits. A scheme for letting lodgings, and another scheme for selling Irish linens at Bath having proved impracticable, she made a final appeal

[1] Swift: *Works:* (ed. Scott), vol. XVIII, p. 147.

[2] In 1754, at a sale of 150 pictures belonging to Dr. Mead, a picture of "Mrs. Barber the poetess, in Water Colours," brought only 1*l.* 9*s*, the next lowest price paid for any picture. (*Notes and Queries*, 5th Series, vol. II, p. 107.) Mrs. Barber suffered from severe attacks of gout and she had been one of Dr. Mead's patients.

to Swift. Dr. King of Oxford and Mrs. Cleland had spoken so warmly of Swift's *Treatise on Polite Conversation* that many people wished to see it, and Lady Worsley with many other of Mrs. Barber's patronesses urged her to ask Swift to let her publish it for her own benefit. After apologies for asking such a favor she says:

> I humbly beseech you, sir, if you do not think it proper not to be offended with me for asking it; for it was others, that out of kindness to me, put me upon it. They said you made no advantage for yourself, by your writings; and that, since you honoured me with your protection, I had all the reason in the world to think it would be a pleasure to you, to see me in easy circumstances; that everybody would gladly subscribe for anything Dr. Swift wrote; and indeed, I believe in my conscience, it would be the making of me.[1]

Dean Swift presented her with the copy and the sale proved advantageous.

The career of a mediocre writer like Mrs. Barber would hardly justify chronicling were it not for the interesting exemplification it offers of the system of patronage. Swift and his influential friends manifest no particular interest in Mrs. Barber's "moral and not inelegant verse," but responsibility for her welfare seems to have been accepted by them without demur, nor does she seem to have felt any hesitancy about accepting any aid that might be forthcoming.

The most vivid introduction to Mrs. Grierson comes from the pen of her early friend Mrs. Pilkington:

Mrs. Constantia Grierson (1706?-33)

> About two years before this a young Woman of about eighteen years of age, was brought to my Father, by a Stationer to be by him instructed in Midwifery.[2] She was Mistress of *Hebrew*, *Greek*, *Latin*, and *French*, understood the *mathematicks*, as well as most men. And what made these extraordinary Talents yet more surprizing was, that her Parents

[1] Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), vol. XIX. pp. 5–9.

[2] "There being then but one Man-Midwife in the Kingdom my Father made himself Master of That useful Art, and practised it with great success, Reputation and Humanity." (Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. VII, p. 12.)

were poor illiterate Country People; so that her learning appeared like the Gift poured out on the Apostles, of speaking all languages, without the Pains of Study; or, like the intuitive Knowledge of Angels: Yet in as much as the Power of Miracles is ceased; we must allow she used human Means for such great and excellent Acquirements: And yet in a long Friendship and Familiarity with her, I could never obtain a satisfactory Account from her on this Head; only she said, "she had received some little Instruction from the Minister of the Parish, when she could spare time from her Needlework, to which she was closely kept by her Mother." She wrote elegantly both in Verse and Prose; and some of the most delightful Hours I ever past, were in the Conversation of this female Philosopher.

My Father readily consented to accept her as a Pupil; and gave her a general Invitation to his Table, so that she and I were seldom asunder. My Parents were well pleased with our Intimacy, as her Piety was not inferior to her Learning. Whether it was owing to her own Desire, or the Envy of those who survived her, I know not; but of her various and beautiful Writings except one Poem of her's in Mrs. Barber's Works, I have never seen any published; 't is true, as her turn was chiefly to philosophical or divine Subjects, they might not be agreeable to the present Taste.[1]

A eulogy of Mrs. Grierson was written by Henry Brooke (1703?–1783) the author of a tragedy, *Gustavus Vasa*, and various popular novels, in a poem on "The Art of Printing," and an account of her, derived from his notes, was published in *Brookiana* in 1804.

Mr. Brooke has celebrated the learning, piety, and virtue, of Mrs. Grierson, in a poem which he wrote on the Art of Printing. This lady was born in the city of Kilkenny. Such is the vanity of man, that he thinks he pays a sufficient compliment to woman, when he says, she has a masculine mind, when, in truth, it is known that there are many females on record, who have rivalled the lords of the creation in every branch of science, and department of learning. In this constellation the name of Mrs. Grierson will shine with increasing luster. Her father observed, that his daughter, while yet a child, was very fond of books, and not-withstanding his circumstances were narrow, he was determined to furnish her with all those that he thought were suited to her years; but he soon found, to his great joy, that her capacity was not to be measured by her years, it flew before them; and that her

[1] Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. I, pp. 27–29.

genius and inclination would triumph over every difficulty, even without the aid of a master. In a time that is almost too short to be mentioned, she was allowed by competent judges, to be a perfect mistress of the Greek and Roman tongues; and whilst other young women were proud of carrying the keys of closets, etc., she carried the keys of science, which she unlocked and surveyed, not with a transient eye, but with the warmth and constancy of one that fell in love with their beauties, and could duly appreciate their charms, so that all her attainments may be said to have been dictated by nature, aided by laudable curiosity and industry. She was early married to George Grierson, Esq., the king's printer. As he had a good library, she had an opportunity of indulging her literary pursuits.[1]

After her marriage Mrs. Grierson carried on her studies with such ardor that at twenty-one she brought out an edition of Terence and at twenty-three an edition of Tacitus. When she died at twenty-seven, she left a partially completed edition of Sallust. Mrs. Barber says that she also wrote an unpublished *Abridgment of the History of England*. Her Tacitus has received high praise. Dr. Harwood, a learned bibliographer, commented on it in the following terms:

> This is one of the best edited books ever delivered to the world. *Mrs. Grierson* was a lady possessed of singular erudition, and had an elegance of taste and solidity of judgment, which justly rendered her one of the most wonderful as well as amiable of her sex. Prefixed to this edition of Tacitus, is a dedication to *Lord Carteret*, in most elegant Latinity.[2]

Mrs. Grierson also wrote occasional verse a few specimens of which appear in Mrs. Pilkington's *Memoirs*, in *Poems by Eminent Ladies*, and in Mrs. Barber's edition of her own poems. Mrs. Barber in her Preface praised Mrs. Grierson and gave many of the facts used by later writers. Mr. Ballard was anxious to give a full account of Mrs. Grierson, and he wrote in 1747 to Mrs. Barber for further information. "I likewise," says Mr. Ballard, "got the same friend to apply to a learned and eminent dignitary in the church in Ireland; one who is thor-

[1] *Brookiana*, vol. II, p. 123.
[2] Clarke, Adam: *A Bibliographical Dictionary*, vol. VI, p. 142.

oughly acquainted with all the various circumstances of her life and is every way qualified for the performance." The eminent churchman promised an account of her life, but it never came to hand, so Mr. Ballard was obliged to content himself with a general eulogy. He says, "If Heaven had spared her life, and blessed her with health, which she wanted for some years before her death, there is good reason to think she would have made as great a figure in the learned world, as any of her sex are recorded to have done." Mrs. Grierson, "the learned Nymph Whom Curiosity engaged every Person to see," [1] was on intimate terms with Swift, Thomas Sheridan, and Dr. Delany, and it is singular that a more exact account of her life should not have been preserved.

Lætitia van Lewen Pilkington (1712-50)

Lætitia Pilkington, the daughter of Dr. Van Lewen, a physician of Dublin, was about twenty-two years younger than Mrs. Barber, but Mrs. Barber's work came so late in her life and Mrs. Pilkington was so precocious that they were in effect poetical contemporaries. Lætitia's love for literature and her lively mind were in evidence before she was five. She thus describes the beginning of her education:

> My mother strictly followed *Solomon's* Advice, in never sparing the Rod; insomuch that I have frequently been whipt for looking blue of a frosty Morning; and whether I deserved it or not, I was sure of Correction every Day of my life.
>
> From my earliest Infancy I had a Disposition to Letters; but my Eyes being weak after the Small-pox, I was not permitted to look at a Book; my Mother regarding more the Beauty of my Face, than the Improvement of my Mind; neither was I allowed to learn to read: This Restraint, as it generally happens, made me but more earnest in the Pursuit of what I imagined must be so delightful. Twenty times a Day have I been corrected, for asking what such and such Letters spelt; my Mother used to tell me the Word, accompanying it with a good Box on the Ear, which, I suppose, imprinted it on my Mind. . . . I do assure you, it had this Effect on me, that I never forgot what was

[1] Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 46.

once told me; and quickly arrived at my desired Happiness, being able to read before she thought I knew all my Letters; but this Pleasure I was obliged to enjoy by Stealth with Fear and Trembling.

I was at this Time about five Years of Age; and my Mother being one Day abroad, I had happily laid hold on *Alexander's Feast* and found something in it so charming, that I read it aloud; but how like a condemned Criminal did I look, when my Father, softly opening his Study-door, took me in the very Fact; I dropt my Book and burst into Tears, begging Pardon and promising never to do so again: But my Sorrow was soon dispelled, when he bade me not to be frightened, but read to him, which to his great Surprize, I did very distinctly, and without hurting the Beauty of the Numbers. Instead of the whipping, of which I stood in dread, he took me up in his Arms, and kissed me, giving me a whole Shilling, as a Reward, and told me, "He would give me another as soon as I got a Poem by Heart," which he put into my Hand, and proved to be Mr. Pope's sacred Eclogue; which Task I performed before my Mother returned Home. They were both astonished at my Memory, and from that Day forward, I was permitted to read as much as I pleased; only my Father took care to furnish me with the best, and politest Authors; and took Delight in explaining to me, whatever, by Reason of my tender Years, was above my Capacity of Understanding.

But chiefly was I charmed and ravished with the Sweets of Poetry; all my Hours were dedicated to the Muses; and, from a Reader, I quickly became a Writer; I may truly say with Mr. *Pope*,

I lisp'd in Numbers, for the Numbers came.

My Performances had the good Fortune to be looked on as extraordinary for my Years; and the greatest and wisest Men in the Kingdom did not disdain to hear the Prattle of the little Muse, as they called me, even in my Childish Days. But as I approached towards Womanhood a new Scene opened to me; and by the Time I had looked on thirteen Years, I had almost as many Lovers.

At seventeen Lætitia married a penniless Irish parson, Mr. Matthew Pilkington. Soon after their marriage they became well known in the Dublin literary set. Constantia Grierson who was the first to congratulate Lætitia on her marriage, and who witnessed the cruel treatment the couple received from Mrs. Van Lewen, introduced them to Dr. Delany who befriended them. Through Dr. Delany they met Swift, who was much taken by the "little poetical parson and his littler poeti-

cal wife." He called them "The Mighty Thomas Thumb and her Serene Highness of Lilliput,"[1] and for a short time they were evidently much at the deanery. The most famous portions of her *Memoirs* have to do with Swift. His early biographers were apparently unwilling to own how much of their vivid, picturesque material came from a source so little esteemed, but Mr. Craik credits Mrs. Pilkington with "a picture of the Dean which is probably more true to the life than many that are more pretentious."[2] The young lady's wit, vivacity, courage, and independent mind brought a new and piquant element into Swift's life. He scolded her till she fled in tears, but at his imperious summons she always came back in new, adoring subjection. On one occasion, after an exceptionally severe castigation, he wrote sharply but with an underlying compliment: "You must shake off the Leavings of your Sex. If you cannot keep a Secret, and take a Chiding, you will quickly be out of my Sphere. Corrigible People are to be chid; those who are otherwise, may be very safe from any Lectures of mine: I should rather choose to indulge them in their Follies, than attempt to set them right."[3] Usually her wit could turn an impending quarrel into some sort of gay banter. On one occasion Swift began to reprimand her for having copied out one of his manuscript poems. But she interrupted, saying she did not copy it, but knew it by heart from one reading. Whereupon there ensued a memory contest. The test given her was from Shakespeare, all of whose works she said she could repeat. "The Line he first gave me, he had purposely picked out for its Singular Oddness: *But* [sic] *rancours in the Vessel of my Peace.* Macbeth. I readily went on with the whole Speech, and did so several times, that he tried me with the different Plays. The Dean then took down *Hudibras*, and ordered me to examine him in it, as he had done me in *Shakespeare;* and, to my great

[1] Swift to Lord Bathurst, October, 1730: *Works* (Elrington Ball), vol. IV, p. 169, note.

[2] Craik, Henry: *Life of Swift*, vol. II, p. 189.

[3] Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 132. Swift: *Works* (ed. Scott), vol. XVIII, p. 171.

surprize, I found he remembered every Line from Beginning to End of it."[1]

When Swift first saw little Mrs. Pilkington as a bride he exclaimed, "What, this poor little Child married! God help her, she is early in Trouble."[2] The words were prophetic, for the troubles began very soon. They were engendered by literary jealousy, for Mr. Pilkington was a poet on his own account. Compliments to the wife became as wormwood to the husband, especially when such compliments were accompanied by frank depreciation of his own talents. Swift once put a question to Mrs. Pilkington and received her answer. Mr. Pilkington then entered the room and was asked the same question and gave an unsatisfactory answer. "P–x on you for a Dunce," said the Dean. "Were your Wife and you to sit for a Fellowship, I would give her one, sooner than admit you a Sizar." From that time on Mr. Pilkington viewed his wife "with scornful yet with jealous eyes."[3]

On another occasion the two wrote odes in imitation of Horace. Angered at her success Mr. Pilkington told her that a Needle was more becoming to a Woman's Hand than a Pen, and was placated only when the lady consigned her own ode to the flames and highly praised his. Her comment is: "And here let me seriously advise every Lady, who has the Misfortune to be poetically turned, never to marry a Poet. . . . If a Man cannot bear his Friend should write, much less can he endure it in his Wife; it seems to set them too much on a Level with their Lords and Masters; and this I take to be the true Reason why even Men of Sense discountenance Learning in Women, and commonly choose for Mates the most illiterate and stupid of the Sex; and bless their Stars their Wife is not a Wit."[4] Jealousy was, however, the least of Mr. Pilkington's faults. He soon proved himself "the arrantest rogue in England." The action he brought against his wife for divorce was not sustained by the courts, but the outcome of it was that he

[1] Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. I, p. 135.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 119.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 120.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 249.

abandoned her and her two children, and she was left penniless. She went to London where she lived a life compounded of misfortunes and misdemeanors.

In the *Memoirs* she gives *in extenso* the various expedients whereby she tried to get a living. One of the most successful was as a public letter-writer for which she issued the following card:

> *Letters written here on any Subject, except on the Law, Price Twelvepence; Petitions also Drawn at the same Rate. Mem. Ready Money, no Trust.*[1]

Under cover of getting subscriptions for the *Memoirs*, she really lived on the charities of the charitable and what she euphemistically termed "contributions from the great." Colley Cibber [2] especially befriended her and urged her to push forward the *Memoirs*. But spite of all aid her course was downward. At one time she was even imprisoned for debt.[3] On her release she tried to keep a print and pamphlet shop,[4] but failed. And finally she wandered back to Dublin where she died at thirty-eight.

The one book by which Mrs. Pilkington is known is her *Memoirs*, the three volumes of which appeared in 1748. In 1754 a third edition appeared with an additional volume by her son. Shortly after her death there appeared a compilation entitled *The Celebrated Mrs. Pilkington's Jests; or, The Cabinet of Wit and Humour*. In the *Memoirs* the early happy life in Dublin and the later tricks and shifts and intrigues of the London life are described with equal frankness. The result was a tarnished fame as a woman, but an undisputed reputation as a clever writer. When the Earl of Chesterfield wondered that

[1] Mrs. Pilkington: *Memoirs*, vol. II, p 249.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 84, 224, 231, 234. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 221.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 240. At the beginning of the eighteenth century we not infrequently find notice of women book-sellers. as Elizabeth Janeway of Chichester (1697); Eleanor Smith (1697); Elizabeth Whitlocke (1697–99); Anne Speed at Three Crowns, Exchange Alley (1705–09); Mrs. Billingsly under Royal Exchange (1707); Margaret Coggan (1708–09); Mrs. Appleby of Gravesend (1711); Mrs. Small of Deal (1711); etc. (*Term Catalogues, passim.*)

she could write English so well, she sent word to his lordship that Dr. Swift had been her tutor.

As a literary critic Mrs. Pilkington is especially severe on the immorality of some contemporary women writers. Speaking of a lady who had refused to subscribe to her book she said:

> She would have purchased my Book sooner than the Bible, to indulge her private Meditations, Especially if I had the wicked Art of painting up Vice in attractive Colours, as too many of our Female Writers have done, to the Destruction of Thousands, amongst whom Mrs. Manly and Mrs. Haywood deserve the foremost Rank.
>
> But what extraordinary Passions these Ladies may have experienced, I know not; far be such Knowledge from a Modest Woman: Indeed Mrs. *Haywood* seems to have dropped her former luscious Stile, and, for Variety presents us with the insipid: Her *Female Spectators* are a Collection of trite Stories, delivered to us in stale and worn-out Phrases: Bless'd Revolution!
>
> *Yet of the two, less dang'rous is th' Offence*
> *To tire the Patience, than mislead the Sense.*
>
> And here give me leave to observe, that amongst the Ladies that have taken up the Pen, I never met with but two who deserved the Name of a *Writer;* the first is Madam *Dacier*, whose Learning Mr. Pope, while he is indebted to her for all the notes on *Homer*, endeavoured to depreciate; the second is Mrs. Catherine Philips, the matchless *Orinda*, celebrated by Mr. *Cowley*, Lord *Orrery*, and all the Men of Genius who lived in her Time.
>
> I think this incomparable Lady was one of the first Refiners of the *English* Numbers. I cannot, except my own Country-woman *Mrs. Grierson*, find out another female Writer, whose Works are worth reading; she indeed had a happy and well-improved Genius!

The last glimpse we have of Mrs. Pilkington is most effective in the dramatic contrast it presents. On Thursday, April 12, 1750, John Wesley wrote in his Dublin Diary: "I breakfasted with one of the Society, and found she had a lodger I little thought of. It was the famous Mrs. Pilkington, who soon made an excuse for following me up stairs. I talked with her seriously about an hour: we then sung, 'Happy Magdalene.' She appeared to be exceedingly struck: how long the impression may last, God knows." [1]

[1] *The Heart of John Wesley's Journal*, p. 182.

Mrs. Mary Davys wrote a comedy produced at Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1716, and a didactic novel, *The Reform'd Coquet*, which appeared in 1724. Her *Works*, in two volumes, appeared in 1725. Miss Morgan says that the young lord who is the hero of *The Reform'd Coquet*, is one of the earliest examples in fiction of "the perfect prig of which Sir Charles Grandison is the consummate example."[1] She was the wife of the Reverend Peter Davys, master of the free school of St. Patrick's, Dublin, so she came into the circle of Swift. Dr. Ewen of Cambridge formerly had thirty-six letters from Swift to Mr. and Mrs. Davys. Mr. Davys died in 1698 and Mrs. Davys was "left to her own endeavours." In 1713 she wrote to Swift complaining that he had not written to her for four years. "I have honestly told her," he said, "it was my way never to write to those whom I am never likely to see, unless I can serve them, which I cannot her, etc. Davis the schoolmaster's widow.'"[2] She was not so fortunate as Mrs. Grierson and Mrs. Pilkington.

Mrs. Mary Davys (fl. 1725)

Mrs. Collyer's publications were anonymous and she has been hardly more than a name in literary history. Recent investigations have, however, shown her to be of genuine importance, not merely as a writer of considerable ability, but especially as an author in whom romantic tendencies found early and well-defined statement.[3] Mrs. Collyer was the wife of Joseph Collyer, a compiler, translator, and publisher to whom her books have sometimes been attributed. Her son was Joseph Collyer, an engraver of merit. Mr. Collyer's income was apparently small, for Mrs. Collyer wrote for the support of her family.

Mrs. Mary Mitchell Collyer (1716?-1762?)

[1] Morgan, Charlotte E.: *The Rise of the Novel of Manners*, p. 70.

[2] Swift, Jonathan: *The Journal to Stella*, February 21, 1713.

[3] See an article entitled "An early Romantic Novel," by Miss Helen Sard Hughes in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. xv, pp. 564–97. In an unpublished manuscript Miss Hughes has made an elaborate study of Mrs. Collyer in her relation to her times. I am indebted to this study for many suggestions.

In the Dedication to her *Death of Abel* she said: "Placed by the hand of Providence at an humble distance from the Great, my cares and pleasures are concentrated within the narrow limits of my little family, and it is in order to contribute to the support and education of my children, I have taken up my pen."

The seven works attributed to Mrs. Collyer fall between 1743 and 1763. It is unnecessary to consider these works here in detail except so far as may serve to indicate their historical significance. For this purpose we may take up first the last of her books, the translations from the German, for it is on these that her modicum of fame has rested. When Mrs. Collyer translated Gesner's *Der Tod Abels* in 1761 and began Klopstock's *Messiah* the year after, she was a pioneer in a new kind of learning. The professed linguists seldom included German in their list, and German literature was practically unknown.[1] Mr. Haney, in his study of "German Literature in England before 1790," gives William Taylor of Norwich as "the first literary critic to attempt a systematic introduction of German literature into England," and Mr. Taylor's period of literary activity did not begin until 1790. Of the sporadic translations before that period, aside from scientific and theological works and a few hymns, Mr. Haney cites but two anterior to Mrs. Collyer's *Death of Abel.* There were few more popular works in the eighteenth century than this translation. There were eighteen editions in twenty-one years, and many later editions. It satisfied alike the pious reader and the lover of fiction. *The Quarterly Review* for 1814[2] says: "No book of foreign growth has ever become so popular in England as the Death of Abel. Those publishers whose market lies among that portion of the people who are below what is called the public, but form a far more numerous class, include it regularly among their 'sacred classics': it has been repeatedly printed at country presses with

[1] See article by Mr. John Louis Haney on "German Literature in England before 1790," in *Americana Germanica,* vol. IV, pp. 130–54; and an article on "The Influence of Solomon Gesner upon English Literature," by Miss Bertha Reed, in *German American Annals,* vol. VII (1905), vol. VIII (1906).

[2] Article VI, vol. XI, p. 78.

worn types and on coarse paper; and it is found at country fairs, and in the little shops of remote towns almost as certainly as the Pilgrim's Progress and Robinson Crusoe." Miss Hughes quotes numerous other testimonies to the same effect.

This remarkable popularity was due, of course, to the original author rather than to the translator. Mrs. Collyer's version received high contemporary praise, but according to modern ideas it would be counted loose and inaccurate. Miss Reed characterizes the style as unnatural and affected, and she thinks that while the translation made Gesner widely known, it in reality injured his fame. But the excellence of the work, or its defects, are not so significant in a study of Mrs. Collyer as are the facts that she was sufficiently well trained in German to give even a fairly adequate version, and that she should be the first to present a German poet of the new school to an English public.

Mrs. Collyer died before completing her translation of Klopstock and her husband carried it to a conclusion. He said in his Preface that his wife's fatal illness was brought on by her agitation of mind in connection with her work on the *Death of Abel.*

Mrs. Collyer's *Christmas Box* is another instance of pioneer work. Its full descriptive title is *A Christmas Box, Consisting of Moral Stories, adapted to the Capacities of Little Children and calculated to give them early impressions of Piety and Virtue. Two volumes. Adorned with cuts.* The *Christmas Box* and Miss Fielding's *Little Female Academy* appeared in 1749, five years after Newbery's first child's book, *The Little Pretty Pocket Book*, of 1744. In 1745 he brought out three volumes of *The Circles of the Sciences*, and in 1751–52 *The Lilliputian Magazine.* Thus a new class of literature was definitely started, with Mrs. Collyer and Miss Fielding as important contributors to the spread of the idea at its inception.[1]

Two of Mrs. Collyer's novels are translations from the

[1] See article by F. J. Harvey Darton on children's books, in *Cambridge History of Literature*, vol. XI, chap. XVI.

French, and are of slight importance in comparison with her one original novel the full title of which is *Felicia to Charlotte: Being Letters from a Young Lady in the Country, to her Friend in Town. Containing A Series of the most interesting Events, interspersed with Moral Reflections; chiefly tending to prove that the Seeds of Virtue are implanted in the Mind of Every Reasonable Being.* Volume one appeared in 1744 and a second volume in 1749. Miss Hughes in her analysis of this novel [1] points out various elements that forecast ideas not dominant till some decades later. It was a novel of purpose, written for ethical and religious ends, and as such antedates *John Buncle* by twelve years. It is also a novel of feeling. Its hero, Lucius, must wait for Sterne before he can find his true kin. The courtship of Lucius is punctuated with sighs and tears, with the overwrought emotions of a sensitive heart. Steele's *Conscious Lovers* offers an early sentimental parallel, but the type was not fully developed till in the seventies. The first volume ends with the marriage of Felicia and Lucius. In the second volume the happy pair, now quite sane and sensible, are able to discuss with fluency and precision their ideas on the nurture and education of children. This volume was thus a pedagogic romance of the sort that became popular after Rousseau.

The most interesting of all the new ideas brought forward by Felicia and Lucius is their love of nature and of country life. They choose the country as a place of residence and justify their choice on rational grounds. And Mrs. Collyer has a surprising fullness and ardor of description, and a sincere joy in nature not equaled in fiction before *John Buncle* (1756–66), and she is a decade earlier.[2] It was only in poetry or in philosophical theory that Mrs. Collyer could have found sources for

[1] Hughes, Helen Sard: *Mary Mitchell Collyer: A Romanticist of the Mid-Century*, chap. III (unpublished manuscript).

[2] In my study, *Nature in English Poetry between Pope and Wordsworth*, in a brief account of fiction from this point of view, I gave *John Buncle* as the earliest writer of fiction to make abundant use of nature. It is interesting to find Mrs. Collyer, not only antedating him, but excelling him in accuracy and fullness.

her literary use of nature. Spenser, Milton, and Thomson were well known to her and they doubtless influenced her.

Connected with this love of nature are Mrs. Collyer's ideas on gardening. When she and Lucius bought their estate it was in the formal style, but they at once changed it to make it appear as much like nature as possible. In this Mrs. Collyer was not entirely original, for the *Spectator* and the *Guardian*, Pope, Switzer, and Batty Langley had decried the stiff regularity of the formal garden, and Kent's great gardens came between 1730 and 1748. But Mrs. Collyer promptly took up the new ideas and she ranks among their early defenders.

Mrs. Collyer is very interesting because she showed herself in these various ways so sensitive to new ideas. She seemed to know what was in the air even before it had had any but the most casual expression. She sat down very modestly and with much trepidation to write anonymous translations and novels for the support of her family, but she was, quite unconsciously it may be, treading the path of the pioneer.

Sarah Fielding's first and most important novel, *The Adventures of David Simple in search of a Faithful Friend* (1744), received extraordinary commendation from the two contemporary authors whose judgments might be counted authoritative, Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson. Fielding's satiric picture of Mrs. Western in *Tom Jones* is more than offset by his utterances in connection with his sister Sarah's books. When *David Simple* appeared, *Joseph Andrews* had been two years before the public, and it was natural that her popular little book should be attributed to Fielding. But when the second edition came out (also 1744) he took occasion to disavow his supposed authorship, and likewise to commend the book.

Sarah Fielding (1710-1768)

> A third, and indeed the strongest, reason which hath drawn me into print, is to do justice to the real and sole author of this little book; who, notwithstanding the many excellent observations dispersed through it, and the deep knowledge of human nature it discovers, is a

young woman; one so nearly and dearly allied to me, in the highest friendship as well as relation, that if she had wanted any assistance of mine I would have been as ready to have given it to her as I would have been just to my word in owning it; but, in reality, two or three hints which arose on the reading it, and some little direction as to the conduct of the second volume, much the greater part of which I never saw till in print, were all the aid she received from me. Indeed, I believe there are few books in the world so absolutely the author's own as this. . . .

And as the faults of this work want very little excuse, so its beauties want as little recommendation; though I will not say but they may sometimes stand in need of being pointed out to the generality of readers. For as the merit of this work consists in a vast penetration into human nature, a deep and profound discernment of all the mazes, windings, and labyrinths, which perplex the heart of man to such a degree that he is himself often incapable of seeing through them; and as this is the greatest, noblest, and rarest of all the talents which constitute a genius; so a much larger share of this talent is necessary even to recognize these discoveries when they are laid before us than fall to the share of a common reader. . . .

As to the characters here described, I shall repeat the saying of one of the greatest men in this age, — "That they were as wonderfully drawn by the writer as they were by Nature herself." There are many strokes in Orguiel, Spatter, Varnish, Levif, the Balancer, and some others which would have shined in the pages of Theophrastus, Horace, or La Bruyère. Nay, there are some touches which I will venture to say might have done honour to the pencil of the immortal Shakespeare himself.[1]

For a continuation of *David Simple* in 1747,[2] Fielding wrote a dedication and five letters. In this Preface he gave his opinion on learning for women:

The objection to the sex of the author hardly requires an answer; it will be chiefly advanced by those who derive their opinion of women, very unfairly, from the fine ladies of the age; whereas, if the behavior of their counterparts, the beaux, was to denote the understanding of men, I apprehend the conclusion would be in favour of the women, without making a compliment to that sex. I can, of my own knowledge and from my own acquaintance, bear testimony to the possibility of those examples which history gives of women eminent for the high-

[1] Fielding, Henry: *Complete Works* (edited by Thomas Roscoe), p. 630.
[2] *Familiar Letters between the Characters of David Simple.* (1747).

est endowments and faculties of mind. I shall only add an answer to the same objection, relating to David Simple, given by a lady of very high rank, whose quality, is however, less an honour to her than her understanding. "So far," said she, "from doubting David Simple to be the performance of a woman, I am well convinced it could not have been written by a man." [1]

Miss Fielding's own views on the woman question are slightly indicated in this story. In the course of his peregrinations David Simple meets the charming Miss Cynthia, who tells him the story of her life and leads him to reflect upon the irritation and unhappiness which result from the undue restrictions imposed upon women. Miss Cynthia had always been subject to repression. Whenever she asked questions she was told, such things were not proper for girls of her age to know. She was not allowed to read, for Miss Cynthia must not inquire too far into things lest it should turn her brain. She was to mind her needlework and such things as are useful to women. Reading and poring over books would never get her a husband. Cynthia's restlessness doubtless well represents the state of mind of many a contemporary girl eager for learning, but not able to escape from the feminine conventions.

In 1749 Miss Fielding published a work quite new in form and intention. It was entitled *The Governess; Or, The Little Female Academy. Calculated for the Entertainment and Instruction of Young Ladies in their Education.* It was so popular that a seventh edition appeared in 1760. This little book represents the happenings of nine days in the school of Mrs. Teachum, a gentlewoman who taught young ladies "in Reading, Writing, Working, and in all proper Forms of Behavior." The oldest of her nine young ladies was fourteen, the youngest was six, and the others between six and twelve. The book was professedly written, not for the Mrs. Teachums of the age, but for little girls under twelve. And the instruction embodied was thrown into story form to make it more acceptable to young readers. I know of no earlier similar attempt. Such books as

[1] Fielding, Henry: *Complete Works* (ed. Roscoe), p. 632.

had been written for children were serious and religious in tone. But Miss Fielding's book was lively and entertaining. Each little girl told the history of her life and analyzed her adventures and emotions, particularly her faults and their outcome, in true romance style. But all is kept pretty near to a child's understanding. And there are some occurrences — as a fracas in which the genteel young ladies "fought and scratched and tore like young cats," for the possession of an apple redder and bigger than its companions in the basket, a collation at a dairy farm, sewing-parties in an arbor with Miss Jenny Peace, the fourteen-year old girl, as story-teller and as umpire in all disputes, that must have had extraordinary charm for young misses who had never before seen even a semblance of their own lives in print.

Miss Fielding's other works are of less significance except for her translation of *Xenophon's Memoirs of Socrates; with the Defence of Socrates before his Judges* (1762), which indicates a knowledge of Greek more exact than was common in her day.

The most interesting fact in Miss Fielding's life is her close friendship with Richardson. She was one of the most ardent admirers of his work. She says of Clarissa: "When I read of her I am all sensation; my heart glows; I am overwhelmed; my only vent is tears. . . . Often have I reflected on my own vanity in daring but to touch the hem of her garment." In 1756 Richardson wrote to her:

> Why did you not tell Lady Bradshaigh . . . that you were my much-esteemed Sally Fielding, the author of David Simple? She knows my opinion of you, and of your writing powers. . . . I have just gone through your two vols. of Letters. Have re-perused them with great pleasure, and found many new beauties in them. What a knowledge of the human heart! Well might a critical judge of writing say, as he did to me, that your late brother's knowledge of it was not (fine writer as he was) comparable to yours. His was but as the knowledge of the outside of a clock-work machine, while your's was that of all the finer springs and movements of the inside.[1]

[1] *The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (ed. Barbauld), vol. II, pp. 101–05.

The most popular work by Miss Fielding was *The Little Female Academy*. *David Simple*, to be sure, went through two editions in 1744. But the indications of contemporary recognition are not at all commensurate with the praise from her brother and Richardson and other high authorities. Of foreign appreciation of her work there are more proofs. *David Simple* was translated into German[1] in 1746 and into French in 1755,[2] and *The Countess of Gräfin* was translated into German in 1761.[3] The French translator of *David Simple* commented on the *approbation générale* which this romance had found.[4]

Charlotte Rumsey was the daughter of Colonel James Rumsey, Lieutenant-Governor of New York. At fifteen she was sent to England as the protégé and probable heiress of an aunt. But the aunt became insane, and the girl was left penniless. The only facts that emerge concerning the difficult years before her marriage to Mr. Lennox in about 1748 have to do with her very mediocre career as an actress.

Charlotte Lennox (1720-1804)

Except for a volume of poems in 1747, it was not till after her marriage that Mrs. Lennox came forward prominently as an author. Her two-volume novel, *The Life of Harriet Stuart, Written by Herself*, appeared in 1751. But in literary circles she was evidently well known before this, for Johnson was her especial friend. When her manuscript was ready for publication, he arranged a celebration at his Club. The festivities were

[1] *Die Begebenheiten David Simpels, oder Erzählung von dessen Reisen durch die Städte London und Westminster, am einen wahrhaftigen Freund zu suchen.* Geschrieben durch ein Frauenzimmer. Übersetzt durch M. A. Wodarch. (Hamburg, in der Hertelischen Handlung im Dom. 1746.)

[2] *Le véritable Ami, ou la Vie de David Simple.* Traduit de l'Anglois. (Amsterdam, 1755.)

[3] *Geschichte der Gräfin von Dellwyn;* von Fielding's Schwester, der Verfasserin des *David Simple*. Aus dem Englischen übersetzt. (Leipzig, in der Weidmannschen Handling. 1761.)

[4] Plügge, Georg: *Miss Sarah Fielding als Romanschriftstellerin* (Inaugural-Dissertation, Leipzig).

to last all night. Mrs. Lennox was ceremoniously crowned with laurel, and there was a magnificent hot apple-pie stuck with bay leaves.[1] This first novel is probably in part autobiographical inasmuch as the heroine, Harriet Stuart, is the daughter of a man of high official rank in America, and goes to England at fifteen to live with an aunt who becomes insane and leaves her penniless. But this is merely a slight framework for a series of love adventures. Miss Stuart's wit and beauty gather about her lovers of all varieties, army officers, sea-captains, pirates, merchants; and the alarming crises of her fate put her into close competition with Clarissa Harlowe herself. America, France, and England are the far-separated scenes of Miss Stuart's trials and victories, the emphasis being on her life in America. There would be a chance for some interesting local color in this representation of mid-eighteenth-century life in New York if the young lady could have spared a moment from her adventures to observe her surroundings. An Indian encampment, a visit to a fort, an escapade to a "farm," a midnight row on the Hudson, are mentioned, but with no comment. Towns and houses, roads, rivers, and seas, are but localities for love scenes, means of transit from one episode to another. The story is told with a deft manipulation of details and an easy fluency that would seem to indicate something of a previous literary apprenticeship. At any rate, in this novel she had found her medium, and she was soon ready with a tale that gave her genuine distinction. *The Female Quixote* appeared in 1752 with a Dedication written by Johnson, and it was reviewed by him in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for March. He said of it: "Mr. Fielding, however emulous of Cervantes, and jealous of a rival, acknowledges in his paper of the 24th, that in many instances, this copy excels the original, and though he has no connection with the author, he concludes his encomium on the work, by earnestly recommending it as 'a most extraordinary, and most excellent performance. 'It is,' says he, 'a work of true humour, and cannot fail of giving a rational, as well as a very pleasing

[1] Hawkins, Sir John: *Life of Samuel Johnson*, p. 286.

amusement, to a sensible reader, who will at once be instructed, and highly diverted.'" [1] Johnson's name is still more intimately connected with the book, for he wrote the chapter which has the heading, "Being in the author's opinion, the best chapter in this history." [2] *Harriet Stuart* reads like an echo of Richardson, but in *The Female Quixote* Mrs. Lennox strikes an original note. Comedy had already, a generation earlier, in Biddy Tipkin, made sport of the romance-reading girls of the day. But the satire was new in fiction. And it was carried out with a fullness and accuracy of details possible only to one who had herself been a traveler in enchanted realms. Mrs. Lennox must at some time have been as devoted to French fiction as even Dorothy Osborne and Mrs. Pepys in the preceding century. Her story is long-drawn-out and improbable, but the cleverness with which Arabella and Lucy parody Don Quixote and Sancho Panza gives the book a notable place among the English followers of Cervantes. *The Spiritual Quixote* (1773), a satire on the Methodists, and *The Benevolent Quixote* (1791), a satire on mawkish ideas of charity, are inferior in vivacity and interest to Mrs. Lennox's work.

In 1753–54 Mrs. Lennox brought out *Shakespeare Illustrated; or, Novels and Histories on which the Plays are . . . founded, collected and translated*, an uncritical piece of work according to present standards, but historically significant as one of the earliest attempts to present Shakespeare's sources.[3] A two-volume novel, *Henrietta*, in 1758, was dramatized as a didactic comedy under the title *The Sister*,[4] and brought out at Covent Garden in 1769. Though Miss Mattocks played the chief part, and the Prologue and Epilogue were respectively by Colman and Goldsmith, the play met with but moderate

[1] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XXII, p. 146.

[2] Vol. II, p. 251. This chapter was reprinted entire in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January, 1841, p. 44. It was Miss Mitford who pointed out Johnson's authorship of this chapter. See Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. VII, p. 161.

[3] Johnson, Samuel: *Works* (ed. Murphy), vol. II, p. 58.

[4] Genest: *Some Account of the English Stage*, vol. V, p. 241.

success. In 1760–61 Mrs. Lennox edited *The Ladies Museum*, in which were illustrated articles on natural history written especially for ladies, philosophical discussions simplified for ladies, and continued stories of the love-adventure type evidently calculated for the same tastes. The most interesting character drawing is that of an incipient Mrs. Malaprop in the person of a Mrs. Gibbons.

If any annals were extant of Mrs. Lennox's life we should doubtless find records of continuous study. At least we constantly get new proofs of her learning. *The Memoirs of M. de Bethune, Duke of Sully*, in three volumes in 1756,[1] *The Memoirs of the Countess Berci*, in two volumes in the same year, and *Memoirs for the History of Madame de Maintenon*, in 1757, show not only her mastery of French, but very steady application to intellectual tasks. In 1759 she had what might be considered her crowning honor as a learned lady. She was chosen to edit a translation of Brumoy's *Greek Theatre*. In collaboration with her were Dr. Johnson, Dr. Gregory Sharpe, Dr. Grainger, and John Bourrya, men of recognized standing as scholars.[2]

Mrs. Lennox lived forty-four years after the close of the period under discussion. But she belongs properly in the first half of the century because all her important work comes between 1750 and 1760. After a decade of exceptional literary activity she sinks into obscurity. In 1775 Dr. Johnson assisted in preparing proposals for the publication of her collected works, in three quarto volumes, by subscription. Had this plan been carried out there would doubtless have been preserved much interesting information concerning the social and literary life of an eminently successful mid-eighteenth-century *bas bleu*. From the facts at hand it is easy to see that she was counte-

[1] Reprinted in 1778 and 1810. A new edition in four volumes in 1856 by Bohn announced that the text had been collated with the French "and with such corrections as the ingenious Translator herself would have made on a careful revision of her translation." Johnson reviewed this work favorably in *The Literary Magazine* for 1756.

[2] Johnson, Samuel: *Works* (ed. Murphy), vol. II, p. 1.

nanced by some of the best minds of her time. Her portrait was painted by Reynolds and engraved by Bartolozzi.

Miss Catharine Talbot (1721-1770)

In 1770 Miss Elizabeth Carter gathered together and published the *Works* of her friend Miss Catharine Talbot. There had been considerable urgency on the part of Miss Talbot's friends to secure such a publication during her lifetime, but she was too timid, and, though *The Green Book* in which she kept sketches and fragments, and "the considering drawer," constantly received accessions, her modest opinion of her own worth and an exaggerated dread of general criticism held her back from the ordeal of the printed page. But when the *Works* finally appeared they achieved immediate popularity. The *Reflections on the Seven Days of the Week* went through three editions the first year and there was a tenth edition in 1784. Of the *Works* the eighth edition appeared within forty years. The extravagant contemporary estimate of Miss Talbot as a moral and religious writer, as a supporter of Christian ethics, can awake only surprise in the modern reader. Even a reader whose mind has been subdued to second-class eighteenth-century didacticism finds Miss Talbot's moralizings pale and anæmic. But when we read her letters we come upon a much more attractive and vital personality. A letter descriptive of Mr. Browne Willis and his four daughters shows a gay spirit and a talent for minute observation and social satire of the Jane Austen type.[1]

From the age of five Miss Talbot lived in the family of Mr. Secker, Bishop of Oxford and later Archbishop of Canterbury. Her spiritual and mental training were constantly under the supervision of the Archbishop, who loved her devotedly. And her education is particularly interesting as an illustration of the desultory and fragmentary character of the intellectual discipline provided for a girl of active mind, even in one of the best families. One advantage was hers from early life, and that was her association with the learned guests at the deanery

[1] Nichols: *Anecdotes of Bowyer*, p. 248.

where there was always an atmosphere of scholarly and serious discussion. And her position as a member of the Archbishop's family not only gave her entrance into the best social circles, but made it incumbent on her, as hostess or guest, to cultivate the amenities of life. But she did comparatively little in the way of exact studies. She was proficient in French and Italian, but she knew no Hebrew or Greek and but little Latin. She had tutors in geography and astronomy and found satisfaction in the conceptions opened up to her by these subjects. Of her drawing and painting for which she had considerable repute she wrote in 1745:

I learn of a good master but am much too impatient and too volatile to give half the time and application that are necessary to make anything tolerable, yet I undertake large pictures, like an inconsiderate goose as I am, and then have the mortification to leave them unfinished. This is actually the case with a fine holy family of Carlo Maratti's, which I began last winter (and two or three other pictures at the same time) in crayons, and which must now want the perfecting touches till February or March. At the same time I had undertaken to learn perspective of Mr. Wright. I hope from all these things I shall in time learn discretion at least, and not to be thus perpetually aiming *de prendre la lune avec les dents.*[1]

This letter was written when she was twenty-five. A *Dialogue* written at eighteen gives an earlier glimpse of her chaotic student life. This *Dialogue* is entitled "Enquiry how far Practice has kept pace with Intention."

What have you done, this Summer?
Rode, and laughed, and fretted.
What did you intend to do?
To learn geography, mathematics; decimal fractions and good humour: to work a screen, draw copies of two or three fine prints, and read abundance of history: to improve my memory and restrain my fancy: to lay out my time to the best advantage: to be happy myself, and make everybody else so. To read Voltaire's Newton, Whiston's Euclid, and Tillotson's Sermons.
Have you read nothing?

[1] *The Works of the Late Miss Catharine Talbot,* vol. I, p. 98.

Yes: some of the Sermons; Mrs. Rowe's Works; The Tale of a Tub; a book of Dr. Watt's; L'Histoire du Ciel; Milton, and abundance of plays and idle books.

Archbishop Secker's household presents an agreeable picture of lettered leisure. During the evenings there are long sessions known as "the family readings." In 1751 they are reading Pope's *Works*, evidently in the recent nine-volume edition by Warburton. They are filled with mingled pride and shame as they reflect on his genius and his failings. They have read Mrs. Cockburn's defense of him and they love her for her zealous championship. But Pope is not their idol. All their hero worship, at least all of Miss Talbot's hero worship, goes to Richardson. She cannot subscribe to any criticism of him. In a discussion of one of his essays in *The Rambler*, Miss Carter's strictures bring a spirited protest from Miss Talbot:

He does not pretend to give a scheme (not an entire scheme) of female education, only to say how when well educated they should behave, in opposition to the racketing life of the Ranelagh-education misses of these our days. Do read it over again a little candidly. How can you ever imagine that the author of Clarissa has not an idea of what women may be, and ought to be.

Richardson and Miss Talbot were personal friends and he thought so highly of her judgment that when he contemplated creating the character of a perfect gentleman as the hero of *Sir Charles Grandison*, he consulted her concerning the traits of this superman. She in turn consulted Miss Carter, and when the book appeared she wrote to Miss Carter in great glee:

Oh! Miss Carter, did you ever call Pigmalion a fool, for making an image and falling in love with it . . . and do you know that you and I are two Pigmalionesses? Did not Mr. Richardson ask us for some traits of his good man's character? And did we not give him some? And has not he gone and put these and his own charming ideas into a book and formed a Sir Charles Grandison?

Beside the evening readings there were leisurely literary picnics, where by some riverside they drank tea and read Madame de Sévigné's *Letters* and Miss Fielding. They read Mrs. Cock-

burn and Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Lennox, even the *Memoirs* of Mrs. Constantia Phillips, and the early verse of Miss Mulso. There is time for slow and meditative reading, and for interested comment and question, back and forth, by letter. It was a normal, unpretentious, and stimulating way to gain an acquaintance with contemporary literature. And the great classics were read, in translations, in the same manner. To read with a learned man like Archbishop Secker was in itself an education.

It is thus that Miss Talbot had all the environment of education with none of its disciplinary work. By twenty she was known as "the celebrated Miss Talbot" without any basis of actual achievement. She seems to have embodied an eighteenth-century ideal. Her religious beliefs were beyond cavil, her conduct irreproachable. She had an alert mind, wide interests, and considerable information on varied topics. She had a high social rank, and she recognized social obligations. She was affable, approachable, attentive. She had enough learning to give her distinction, but not enough even to threaten pedantry. And she exerted all her talents in home and church circles. She was not a Lætitia Pilkington writing scandal for daily bread, nor a Mary Astell protesting against the tyranny of man, nor an Elizabeth Elstob delving in unfashionable research. She awakened no antagonisms. She had the success and happiness that come from being entirely in accord with one's environment.[1]

Mary Leapor (1722-1746)

A few mediocre poetesses at the end of the period may be cursorily noticed because in their own day they attracted some attention. In *Poems by Eminent Ladies* Mary Leapor (1722–1746)[2] is given more

[1] See *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XLIV (1774), p. 376. *Ibid.* (1772), vol. XLII, pp. 135, 257. (Her character by Mrs. Duncomb.) Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. IX, pp. 766–69. (Quotations from the Reverend Weeden Butler's *Memoirs of Bishop Hildesley*, Letter by Dr. Rundle, Letter by Duchess of Somerset.)

[2] In 1748, in accordance with her dying request, her poems were published by subscription for her father's benefit, under the title *Poems on Several Occasions*,

space than any other author. And in these decorous pages she stands out as a distinct individuality. She is the daughter of a gardener, but no such elegant creature as Tennyson's Rose. She has work to do indoors and out, and her life is eminently prosaic. She has a plain face, an awkward figure, and nondescript clothes. But she has no quarrel with fate or her mirror. She seems to have been a shrewd, sensible young woman, vivacious, quick-witted, with no illusions, no sentimentality, no dreams. In her minor fashion she was a satirist of the Pope school. Of the seventeen books in the little library she had painfully gathered, the ones she valued most were by Pope and Dryden. She manages the heroic couplet with considerable correctness and ease and she follows Pope's method of illustrating a topic with verse portraits. Her closely studied country scenes suggest that Gay's *Shepherd's Week* must have been among her books. Considering her youth and contracted way of life, she had a remarkable insight into social foibles, but she had none of Swift's scorn of the human race nor of Pope's personal virulence. Her outlook on life was detached, tolerant, and amused.

Miss Mary Jones (fl. 1755)

In 1755, when Miss Mary Jones was included in *Eminent Ladies*, she was still living, and therefore the date of her birth was not given. But the editorial comment says that Oxford was her home, and "hence deservedly called the Seat of the Muses." Miss Jones corresponded with a maid of honor, had many intimacies among the nobility, and rejoiced in the friendship of Her Royal Highness, the Princess of Orange. Her poems had, therefore, especial opportunities to make their way. But the modest author long resisted the suggested publication of her works. She felt that these "accidental ramblings of her thoughts into rhyme" were of too slight value to be preserved in print. But

by the late Mrs. Leapor *of* Brackley *in* Northamptonshire. Published for the Benefit of the Author's Father. 800. Price *5s. Vol. 2d and last* appeared later at the same price.

she finally, in 1752, came forward with a volume which was greeted with high praise. *The Monthly Review* for 1752 began an Appreciation of her in the following flattering fashion: "To the applauded names of the ingenious *Molly Leapor*, and the truly admirable Mrs. *Cockburn* (see Review, *the preceding volumes*) we have now the pleasure to add that of Mrs. Jones; whose name will not be less an honour to her country, and to the republic of letters, than her amiable life and manner are to her own sex: to that sex whose natural charms alone are found sufficient to attract our tenderest regards; but which, when joined to those uncommon accomplishments and virtues this lady is mistress of, so justly command our highest admiration, and most ardent esteem." *The Review* considers her compositions in verse as "superior to those of any other of our female writers since *Catherine Phillips*" and her prose as "superior to any pieces of the kind that our own country has produced, from the pen of a woman." She was of a gay and vivacious temperament, and social by nature. Her interest in her friends' affairs brought forth many occasional poems. A spider frightens Charlot, Mrs. East's canary bird dies, a hare is sent to Mrs. Clayton, Lady Beauclerk desires an elegy in memory of her husband, — each incident receives poetical commemoration. Epistles on *Patience*, *Desire*, and *Hope* are addressed to her friends among the nobility.

Like Miss Leapor she is a satellite of Pope. She has studied him to such effect that phrases and whole lines from his poems occur in her verse, and to the best of her ability she copies his style. Her *Epistle to Lady Bowyer* is throughout curiously reminiscent of his *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*. Her verse essays are loosely constructed amplifications of Pope's aphorism which she transforms into "Whatever is, is Best."

Mrs. Madan (fl. 1755)

Mrs. Madan ("formerly Miss Cowper") was living in 1755. She was reputed to have fine talents for poetry, an "extraordinary genius," in fact, but she could never be brought to publish any of her poems. She is

therefore known now only by her translation of Abelard's Letter to Eloisa, a kind of companion piece to Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*. It is smooth, well-expressed, and shows some sympathetic understanding of Abelard's emotions.

Miss Mary Masters, a native of Ottley near Leeds in Yorkshire, had an early taste for poetry, but she was "always brow-beat and discountenanced by her parents."[1] The chief poems by her in *Eminent Ladies* are trite paraphrases of the Psalms and need not detain us.

Miss Mary Masters (fl. 1755)

In 1755 she brought out by subscription *Familiar Letters and Poems on Several Occasions*. The letters between her as Maria and various friends in 1755 are of considerable interest. The young ladies discuss, in the main, questions of love and marriage, but some letters at the end of the book concern themselves with the relative powers of men and women. "Miss ——" sustains the conventional view that they differ fundamentally, men having more strength of judgment, and women quicker apprehension. She says that no woman has been great as an orator, that the best women poets are inferior to Milton, and that men have always managed the government. Maria maintains that the difference is not in the faculties themselves, but in the training of the faculties and in opportunities for their use. She cites a young lady of twenty-two in France who had been admitted to the Academy of Science. And one entire letter is a eulogy of Italian learned ladies. She gives the name of Clelia Borromeo of Milan, counted by the Italians "the greatest mathematician their country has produced, except Galileo and Manfredi"; Gabriella Agnesi, also of Milan, skilled in algebraic computations; Countess Tullia Francesca Bizetti Imbonati, a "Lyrick Poetess," another Milanese lady; Laura Catterina Bassi, Professor of Experimental Philosophy in the University of Bologna, and many others. Maria is the earliest apologist for the advancement of women to make such defi-

[1] See *Familiar Letters*, p. 52.

nite and intelligent use of the learned Italian ladies as corroborative illustrations.[1]

[1] "Maria" has made some mistakes in names, but her general accuracy is attested by a reference to Mozans: *Woman in Science.* The eighteenth century was a period of great triumph for learned Italian women. Of the four chief women, Laura Bassi, Anna Manzolini, Maria Agnesi, Clotilda Tambroni, the first three had attained to fame before 1755 when Miss Masters's book appeared. Maria Agnesi (1718–1808) was a European celebrity by the time she was twenty. "M. Charles de Brosses, in his *Lettres Familières écrites de l'Italie en 1739 et 1740,* speaks of Agnesi in terms that recall the marvellous stories which are related of Admirable Crichton and Cico della Mirandola. 'She appeared to me,' he tells us, 'something more stupendous — *una cosa piu stupenda* — than the Duomo of Milan.' Having been invited to a *conversazione* for the purpose of meeting this wonderful woman, the learned Frenchman found her to be 'a young lady about eighteen or twenty.' She was surrounded by 'about thirty people — many of them from different parts of Europe.' The discussion turned on various questions of mathematics and natural philosophy." The astonishment excited by her knowledge of these abstruse subjects was increased by her command of classical Latin which she spoke with purity, care, and accuracy. When the conversation became general she spoke to each person in the language of his own country. At about thirty Maria Agnesi brought out her great work, a treatise in two large volumes on the differential and integral calculus. "It would be impossible to describe the sensation it produced in the learned world. Everybody talked about it; everybody admired the profound learning of the author, and acclaimed her: 'Il portento del sesso, unico al Mondo' — the portent of her sex, unique in the world." (Mozans: *Woman in Science,* pp. 143–53.)

Laura Caterina Bassi (1711–78) would take rank with learned women of any age or nation. At twenty-one she took part in a public disputation on philosophy with some of the most distinguished scholars of the time as her opponents. The brilliancy of her success on this occasion led to a request that she should present herself as candidate for the doctorate in philosophy. This was a still more imposing ceremony. It was held in the Communal Palace which was magnificently decorated for the splendid function. After a discourse in Latin to which she responded in the same tongue, she was crowned with a laurel wreath exquisitely wrought in silver, and had thrown round her the *vajo,* or university gown, both symbols of the doctorate. Her next triumph was when she passed the public examinations and was appointed by acclamation to the chair of physics in the University of Bologna, an office which she held many years, and always with increasing fame. (Mozans: *Woman in Science,* pp. 202-09.)

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was much impressed by the fame of Laura Bassi and wrote to England about her, and Lady Pomfret, on her visit to Italy, made a point of seeing the famous lady professor; but in general the Englishwomen seem to have been quite ignorant of the status of learned women in Italy.

Anna Manzolini (1716–1774) held the chair of anatomy in Bologna for many years and is famous for her wax models of the organs of the human body. (Mozans: *Woman in Science,* pp. 235–37.)

Miss Mary Chandler (1687–1745), the daughter of a minister, was a popular poetess of Bath, where she had at eighteen set up a little shop. She was literary in her tastes and in spite of constant ill-health and the hard work entailed by her shop she found time for wide reading in poetry. She also wrote rhyming riddles and poems to her friends. She became a favorite among the gentry and the literary ladies in and about Bath, Lady Russell, the Duchess of Somerset, Mrs. Barber, and Elizabeth Rowe being among her friends. She often visited at great houses and her poems were handed about with much praise. She was finally advised to make a collection of these occasional verses and publish them. They appeared under the title *A Description of Bath*, and the book was so favorably received that it went through six editions by 1744, and a seventh and an eighth edition in 1755 and 1767. Our knowledge of Miss Chandler comes mainly from Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*. The account published by Cibber was written by Miss Chandler's brother Samuel.[1]

Miss Mary Chandler (1687-1745)

Mary Granville was sent at six to the private school of Mdlle. Puelle. From eight to seventeen she was educated at home according to the established programme for girls destined for marriage and social position. "Music, reading, writing, French, work, and whist" are the occupations she enumerates. At seventeen she was married to Alexander Pendarves, a match counted advantageous though the bridegroom was sixty and detested by the bride. After the wedding — "conducted with much pomp and misery" — there came seven years on an isolated estate where all the skill and patience of the young wife were called into action by the jealous fancies and the hypochondriac whims of her invalid husband. At twenty-four, a beautiful widow, she entered upon a gay period of London life. Socially a success she had many offers of marriage, but her

Mary Granville (Mrs. Delany) (1700-1788)

[1] Cibber: *Lives of the Poets*. Nichols: *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. v, pp. 304–08.

affections were entirely centered upon Lord Baltimore. His impassioned love was not, however, equal to the strain put upon it by her small dowry, and he suddenly married a rich wife. After the long illness that followed this destruction of her hopes Mrs. Pendarves went to Ireland to recuperate. There she met Patrick Delany whom, years later, when she was forty-three, she married. The most satisfying years of her life came after this marriage. Dr. Delany belonged to the best literary set of Dublin, and he was in full accord with his wife's literary and artistic interests. For a quarter of a century her life was one of leisure, stimulating companionship, much reading and discussion, much social variety, and long hours of entertaining hand-work. After Dr. Delany's death in 1768 Mrs. Delany lived in an honored, dignified, but not inactive retirement. She was loved and visited by the King and Queen and by many devoted friends. There had gathered about her name a tradition of love and admiration. A sketch of her entitled "Maria," by Dr. Delany, does not exceed the general impression we get of her charm. He wrote:

> Maria was early initiated into every art, with elegance and condition, that could form her into a fine lady, a good woman, and a good Christian. She read and wrote two languages correctly and judiciously. She soon became a mistress of her pen in every art to which a pen could be applied. She wrote a fine hand in the most masterly manner, she drew, and she designed with amazing correctness and skill. . . .
>
> With a person finely proportioned, she had a lovely face of great sweetness set off with a head of fair hair, shining and naturally curled, with a complexion which nothing could equal, in which the lilies and the roses contended for the mastery. Her eyes were bright . . . indeed, I could never tell the colour they were of, but to the best of my belief they were what Solomon calls "Dove's eyes," and she is almost the only woman I ever saw whose lips were scarlet and her bloom beyond comparison.

Mr. Ballard dedicated the second part of the *Memoirs of Learned Ladies* to her as "the truest judge, and the brightest pattern of all the accomplishments which adorn her sex."

Burke called her "the highest bred woman of the world and the woman of fashion of all ages."

These citations but faintly indicate the impression made by Mrs. Delany on her contemporaries. It is not, however, an impression sustained by any existing work of hers. The seventy-two pictures she painted were copies of old masters with occasional portraits of relatives and friends, and they were highly prized at the time, but no one of them was of sufficient excellence to secure permanent recognition. Her wide and diversified reading is evidenced by her letters which are full of references to the histories, novels, plays, criticism, and devotional works occupying her eager attention. She carried books on every journey. She read or was read to every spare moment. But none of this miscellaneous devotion to books resulted in anything like learning or even in a critically discriminating taste.

Her two real achievements were letter-writing and handwork. Over a thousand of her letters have been published. They are lively and entertaining and are valuable for the study of mid-eighteenth-century social life. Especially vivid are her accounts of festivities. The rooms and their furnishings, the gowns and jewels of the ladies, the refreshments served, the guests and their idiosyncrasies, are effectively sketched in. There is humorous appreciation, but no touch of malice, and almost no gossip. The refinement and sweetness of tone in the letters never becomes vapid or mawkish. There is always a counter-balancing gayety and buoyancy of mood. Mrs. Delany must have made letter-writing nearly as much a matter of business as did Miss Seward, but the heavy "epistolary solicitudes" of the Swan of Lichfield are at the other end of the scale from Mrs. Delany's bright naturalness. Mrs. Delany's letters are but a clear medium revealing "the fine lady, the good woman, and the good Christian" of Dr. Delany's picture of "Maria."

The most surprising element of Mrs. Delany's life is her handwork. In October, 1750, she wrote: "I am going to make a very

comfortable closet, to have a dresser, and all manner of working tools, to keep all my stores for painting, carving, and gilding, etc., for my own room is now so clean and pretty that I cannot suffer it to be strewed with litter, only books and work, and the closet belonging to it to be given up to prints, drawings, and my collections of fossils and minerals."

With almost any tool she had instinctive dexterity, and she had taste and originality. She apparently enjoyed every kind of hand-work that came to her notice. She never wasted a minute. The knotting-shuttle and the embroidery needle were constant attendants on her tea-table hours, and she accomplished almost unbelievable amounts in designing and working fancy gowns, coverings for chairs and sofas, bed-curtains, etc. She made a carpet and other elaborate pieces in double cross-stitch; she did "shell lustres" and chenille work; she designed and executed a chapel ceiling in cards and shells. Most remarkable of all is her herbal begun when she was seventy-two and completed when she was eighty-five. The flowers were made of colored papers and were so accurate as hardly to be distinguished from the flowers themselves. This paper mosaic was left to the Duchess of Portland with a selection of twenty of the flowers to Queen Charlotte. The herbal is now in the British Museum.

A review of the achievements of Mrs. Delany — her painting, her hand-work, her letter-writing, her multifarious reading — shows that these are but incidental to her personal charm. Her beauty, and the loveliness of her nature, made a fine commendatory background for whatever she did. A friend's portrait, a design for a gown, a bit of turning in ivory, a letter — every trifle gained in value when illumined by the "dove's eyes" of so high-bred and elegant a lady. Her character was marked by uprightness, dignity, and good judgment. She was delicate in her feelings, gentle, courteous, and most sincerely kind. All of her qualities made her a desirable member of any family or social group. It is as a fine lady of the best type that she is remembered, not as a learned woman.

Elizabeth Carter lived nearly half a century after the close of the period now under consideration, and her fame as a learned lady belongs chiefly in the second half of the century, but the work on which that fame was based belongs before 1760. Our knowledge of her life comes mainly from two sources, her *Memoirs* published in 1807 by her nephew and executor, Montagu Pennington, and a series of letters between Miss Carter and Miss Talbot written in the years 1741–1770 and published in 1809. There are also many allusions to Miss Carter in contemporary writings.[1]

Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806)

Miss Carter's linguistic tastes were early in evidence, but she was discouragingly slow and dull in mastering language details. It was by sheer force of industry that she developed her remarkable aptitude for foreign tongues. Latin, Greek, and Hebrew she learned from her father. Italian, Spanish, and German she taught herself. French she had learned as a child from a Huguenot refugee minister in Canterbury. She also gained some knowledge of Portuguese, and she finally studied Arabic. She began her career as an author at seventeen with verses signed "Eliza" in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. At twenty-one her slender little volume of poems appeared. It is all occasional verse and nowhere rises to any particular excellence. But its moralizing and reflective tone proved acceptable to many readers and there were new editions in 1762, 1766, 1776, 1777, with a translation into French in 1706.

In 1739 Miss Carter's knowledge of French and Italian, her wide reading, and her interest in philosophical questions were shown by her translation from the French of an attack on Pope's *Essay on Man*, by M. Crousaz,[2] and a translation from

[1] For a recent life see Gaussen: *Alice C. C.: A Woman of Wit and Wisdom.*

[2] This translation from Crousaz was published anonymously and was generally attributed to Dr. Johnson, but an article in Dr. Birch's manuscripts in the British Museum attributes it decisively to her. The note indicates also Dr. Birch's estimate of the translation: "*ELISÆ CARTERÆ. S. P. D. Thomas BIRCH. Versionem tuam Examinis Crousaziani jam perlegi. Summam styli et elegantiam, et in re difficilimâ proprietatem, admiratus.* (*Dabam*) Novemb. 27 1738." Boswell's *Life of Johnson.* (Everyman.) vol. I, p. 78.

the Italian of Algarotti's *Newtonianismo per le dame.*[1] At thirty-two she began her translation of *Epictetus* at the request of Miss Talbot and Archbishop Secker. She kept rather fitfully at this task for three years, from time to time forwarding completed sheets to the deanery. She had not made the translation with any thought of publication and it was with much difficulty that she could be brought to consider the thought of presenting her work to a general public. But consensus of authoritative opinion as to the ethical value of the original and the excellence of the translation led her finally to consent to a subscription publication at a guinea a volume in 1758. The success was unprecedented. Her share of the profits was one thousand guineas and her fame was established beyond cavil.

After *Epictetus* we hear of no more work by Miss Carter. Her intellectual life was not, however, at a standstill. She kept up her languages by daily assigned readings, she read much in ancient and modern history, she shows thorough familiarity with new books of science, poetry, and letters. She practiced on the spinet and German flute. She was an admirable housekeeper, being in especial repute for puddings, cakes, and pastries. All odd minutes were given to work with the needle and the shuttle. And she was guide and teacher to her young half-brothers and sisters. But we get no more poems, no more learned translations.

Her growing reputation as the most distinguished *bas bleu* in England, her social success during London winters, the awe with which her country neighbors regarded her as "the greatest schollard in the world," her travels in England and on the Continent, her literary and artistic friendships — all these given in vivid detail in her letters — belong in the picture of the brilliant life after the mid-century mark.

But in whatever period, from whatever point of view, Miss Carter presents us with a career almost unexampled in the an-

[1] Her translation of Algarotti's *Newtonianismo per le dame* appeared under the title, *Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy Explained for the use of the Ladies. In Six Dialogues on Light and Colour.* Two volumes. 1739.

MISS ELIZABETH CARTER

From an engraving in *The Works of Elizabeth Carter*, 1806

nals of learned ladies. She chose learning young and pursued it undeviatingly, with no hesitancies and no retrospective regrets. There were no disapproving friends or relatives to interpose obstacles in her path. Few girls, even to-day, could have greater freedom in the determination of their own hours, occupations, and pleasures. Her father, though disheartened by her slow progress, was her faithful teacher. Even her stepmother aided and abetted her extravagant devotion to study. She was allowed to determine the momentous question of marriage entirely according to her own inclinations. Her published work met with immediate praise. She was but twenty-two when Johnson published epigrams in Greek and Latin in her honor, and said she should be praised in as many languages as Lewis the Grand. And by middle life she had achieved independence, money, and fame.

Nor was her career merely an external success brilliantly masking unsatisfied inner desires. On the contrary, to the end her eighty-nine years seemed rich and gracious to her. She did not covet other women's lovers or husbands or children or homes. She set possible honors lightly aside. When her friends were urging upon her a place at court, she dreamed that she had cut off her head for the greater convenience of curling her hair, and she declared this dream symbolic of the fatal cost at which honors were often bought. Her joys were of an unambitious, quiet, perennial sort. She loved nature in all its moods of storm and shine. Her genius for friendship nearly equaled the "Matchless Orinda's." She loved reading and had many books. She enjoyed reflection and had many hours of happy solitude. She was domestic in her tastes and found herself loved and needed in her father's home. She had a sound, sweet, sensible, modest nature that not only disarmed criticism, but preserved her from any undue or arrogant emphasis on her position as the most distinguished literary woman of her time. And she had an unfailing sense of humor that sent an undercurrent of enjoyment through even the prosaic and dreary parts of life.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION

1. Boarding-Schools for Girls

Of schools for girls in the period from 1650 to 1750 we can get only the most scattered bits of information. It is apparent that there were boarding-schools for girls from five to sixteen, and that these schools rapidly increased in number, but of the scope and nature of the instruction we have only the most general ideas. In 1677 there appeared the following advertisement:

> In Oxford there is set up a boarding-school for young gentlewomen (by John Waver, Master in the art of dancing) where they may be educated and instructed in the art of dancing, singing, music, writing, and all manner of works.

A more famous school was at Chelsea in Gorges House. Our first knowledge of this boarding-school comes from a play given by the pupils. It was dated 1676 and was entitled "*Beauty's Triumph*, a masque presented by the scholars of Mr. Jeffrey Banister and Mr. James Hart at their new Boarding-School for young Ladies and Gentlewomen kept in that house which was formerly Sir Arthur Gorges at Chelsey." [1] The "Epilogue — Spoken by a young lady" recounts "the serious things" done in the school, embroidery and modeling in wax being the chief items.

> One in rich works with lively colours tells
> Lucretia's rape or mourning Philomel's;
> Each chaste beholder sighs and drops a tear.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Another's different mind more pleasure takes
> In various forms to mould the painted wax;
> Such shape, such beauty in each piece is shown,
> Nature sits pale, or blushing on her own,
> To see her pride by curious art out-done.

[1] Davies, Randall: *The Greatest House at Chelsey*, p. 92.

Between 1680 and 1690 Purcell's *Dido and Æneas* was given at this school. D'Urfey's *Love for Money; or, the Boarding School* (1691) has its scene "Chelsey by the River" and is supposed to refer to this school. It was here that Molly Verney learned to japan. The school maintained its repute under Mr. Portman, and later under Josias Priests.

In 1680 the school was advertised:

> Josias Priests, dancing master, that kept a boarding school for gentlewomen in Leicester Field is removed to the great school-house in Chelsea, which was Mr. Portman's, where he did teach, and will continue the said master and others to the improvement of the said school.

Gorges House was demolished in 1726.

Two other notices belong in the reign of Queen Anne. The first one shows the continued popularity of the Hackney schools:

> Whereas it is reported that Mrs. Overing who keeps a Boarding School at Bethnal Green near Hackney, is leaving off; this is to give Notice that the said Report is false, if not Malicious. And that she continues to take sober young Gentlewomen to board and teach whatever is necessary to the Accomplishment of that sex.

The second one reads,

> Mrs. Elizabeth Tutchin continues to keep her school at Highgate, notwithstanding Reports to the contrary. Where young Gentlewomen may be soberly Educated, and taught all sorts of Learning fit for young Gentlewomen.[1]

In *The Levellers* a dialogue between two young ladies, we have an account of the education given at most of these schools. One of the young ladies says:

> You know my father was a tradesman, and lived very well by his traffick; and I, being beautiful, he thought nature had already given me part of my portion, and therefore he would add a liberal education, that I might be a complete gentlewoman; away he sent me to the boarding school; there I learned to dance and sing; to play on the bass

[1] Ashton, John: *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 17.

viol, virginals, spinet, and guitar. I learned to make wax work, japan, paint upon glass, to raise paste, make sweetmeats, sauces, and everything that was genteel and fashionable.[1]

One element here indicated seems to have held a fairly permanent place, and that is some trifling form of hand-work. A book published in 1671 gives a hint as to the nature of this work. It is entitled *Four hundred new sorts of Birds, Beasts, Flowers, Fruits, Fish, Flyes, Worms, Landskips, Ovals, and Histories, etc. Lively coloured for all sorts of Gentlewomen and School-Mistresses Works.* Many of the kinds of work with which women attempted to get rid of their leisure were apparently taught in the schools. All sorts of needlework seem to have been included in the necessary subjects. The interest in samplers is shown by a reference in *The Tatler*, April 19, 1709, to an "excellent discourse" by "Mrs. Arabella Manly, School-Mistress at Hackney," entitled *An Essay on the Invention of Samplers, communicated by Mrs. Judith Bagford with an account of her Collections for the same.*[2]

In 1714 a "Venerable Correspondent" wrote to *The Spectator* that in her day young women "Worked Beds, Chairs, and Hangings," and urged *The Spectator* to recommend a renewal of these activities. The humorous response is hardly an exaggerated statement of the great pieces of work undertaken by the women of the seventeenth century:

> What a delightful Entertainment must it be to the Fair Sex, whom their native Modesty, and the Tenderness of Men towards them, exempts from Publick Business, to pass their hours in imitating Fruits and Flowers, and transplanting all the Beauties of Nature into their own Dress, or raising a new Creation in their Closets and Apartments. How pleasing is the Amusement of walking among the Shades and Groves planted by themselves, in surveying Heroes slain by their Needle, or little Cupids which they have brought into the World without Pain.
>
> This is, methinks, the most proper way wherein a Lady can shew

[1] Ashton, John: *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 18.

[2] Published in vol. II of *Works* of Dr. W. King in 1776. (*The Tatler*, April 19, 1709, n.)

a fine Genius, and I cannot forbear wishing, that several Writers of that Sex had chosen to apply themselves rather to Tapestry than Rhime. Your Pastoral Poetesses may vent their Fancy in Rural Landskips, and place despairing Shepherds under silken Willows, or drown them in a Stream of Mohair. . . . How memorable would that Matron be, who should have it Inscribed upon her Monument, "That she wrought out the whole Bible in Tapestry, and died in a good old Age, after having covered three hundred Yards of Wall in the Mansion-House."[1]

In the eighteenth century embroidery and tapestry are still an occupation, but other and less tedious works partially supplant them. Pope's Grotto was not an isolated curiosity. *The Spectator* suggests the part women were taking in the manufacture of grottoes:

There is a very particular kind of Work, which of late several Ladies here in our Kingdom seem very fond of, which seems very well adapted to a Poetical Genius: It is the making of Grottos. I know a Lady who has a very Beautiful one, composed by herself, nor is there one Shell in it not stuck up by her own Hands.[2]

Pope wrote an inscription for a "Grotto of Shells at Crux Easton, the Work of Nine young Ladies." These young ladies were sisters and their grotto was also celebrated by "N. H." [3] In 1735 "S. J." wrote a poem to a Lady to accompany a present of shells and stones for her grotto.[4] In 1746 Mr. Graves congratulated Lady Fane on her "grotto divine" where "miracles are wrought by shells." [5]

Paper-cutting also remained something of an art. Waller had praised a lady who skillfully cut a tree in paper.[6] Cutting silhouettes was one of the diversions of the circle of Dr. Swift, Dr. Delany, and Mr. Sheridan. There is a series of poems, concerning "Dan Jackson's Picture Cut in Silk and Paper," by Lady Betty.[7] The most important cut-paper work on record

[1] *The Spectator*, No. 606 (Oct. 13, 1714). [2] *Ibid.*, No. 32 (Dec. 13, 1714).
[3] Dodsley's *Collection of Poems in Six Volumes by Several Hands* (1758, fifth edition), vol. VI, pp. 161–62.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 142.
[5] Johnson: *Works of the English Poets*, vol. VIII, p. 165.
[6] *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 62. [7] *Ibid.*, vol. XXXIX, pp. 233–42.

is Mrs. Delany's herbarium or paper mosaics, but this did not come till the last quarter of the century.[1]

Mrs. Barber's *Patch-Work Screen* gets its name from another sort of device. Screens were adorned by pasting odds and ends of pictures all over them. Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe wrote to the Duchess of Somerset in 1734: "The screen your Ladyship sent me is a Rareeshew for all the women and children about town who have anything of a nice and elegant taste." The Duchess was at this time doing tent-stitch concerning which Mrs. Rowe wrote:

I am delighted with all your entertainments, except the *Tent-stitch;* and that I own, I admire, but then 't is as some people admire virtue, only in speculation. It seems to me an ante-diluvian invention, a task for those long-breath'd people, who spent a sort of eternity on earth, compar'd to the short duration of a modern period. However, I am in no pain for your Ladyship: whether your attempt is a chair or a stool, I suppose it will be an hereditary occupation; if you finish the branch of a tree, and Lady ——, a shepherd's crook, the service of your generation is done, and you may contentedly leave the rest to be finished by your children's children.

In 1758 Lady Bute had just completed a carpet concerning which she wrote to her mother, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Lady Mary answered:

You need not excuse to me taking notice of your carpet. I think you have great reason to value your-self on the performance, but will have better than I have had if you can persuade anybody else to do so. I could never get people to believe that I set a stitch, when I worked six hours in a day.

Perhaps the most popular of all the arts was japanning. Molly (b. 1675), the daughter of Edmund Verney, was sent at eight to Mrs. Priest's school at Great Chelsey. Her father wrote to her:

I find you have a desire to learn to Jappan, as you call it, and I approve of it; and so I shall of anything that is Good & Virtuous, therefore learn in God's name all Good Things, & I will willingly be

[1] Wheeler, Ethel Root: *Famous Blue Stockings*, pp. 78–82.

at the Charge so farr as I am able — tho' they come from Japan or from never so farr & Looke of an Indian Hue & Odour, for I admire all accomplishments that will render you considerable, and Lovely in the sight of God and man.[1]

The continued favor accorded japanning is shown by a letter from Mrs. Rowe to the Duchess of Somerset in 1734:

My great attainment at present is colouring prints: If Lady —— wants any birds for her new *Japan*, I have some at her service. Mrs. —— is so inchanted with this new japanning, that she has abandon'd Mr. *Baxter*, and the *Greek* Fathers, and employes her time in sticking bears and monkies on all the wooden furniture she can find about the house.

Japanning was taught in most of the schools.

Mrs. Montagu, Queen of the Blue-Stockings, was indefatigable in her devotion to hand-work. Not only was she familiar with every kind of needlework, but she turned in wood and ivory, made shell grottoes, and designed shell frames, and she planned and executed feather hangings for a room. Mrs. Delany is the only lady whose recorded work exceeds that of Mrs. Montagu in amount and variety.

Domestic science was faintly foreshadowed in what were known as "Pastry Schools." The following illustrates the type:

To all young ladies at Edw. Kidder's Pastry School in little Lincoln's Inn Fields are taught all sorts of Pastry and Cookery, Dutch hollow works, and Butter works, on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturday, in the afternoon, and on the same days in the Morning, at his school in Norris Street in St. James's Market, and at his School in St. Martin's Le Grand, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday in the Afternoons. And at his School at St. Mary Overies Dock, Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday Mornings from 9 to 12.[2]

An entertaining passage in Shadwell's *The Scowrers* (1690) indicates something of the character of a girl's education in the country:

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[1] *Memoirs of the Verney Family*, vol. IV, p. 220.

[2] Ashton, John: *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, p. 19.

Priscilla. Did she not bestow good breeding upon you there?

Eugenia. Breeding! what, to learn to feed Ducklings, and cram Chickens?

Clara. To see cows milk'd, learn to Churn, and make cheese?

Eugen. To make Clouted cream, and whipt sillabubs?

Clara. To make a Caraway Cake, and raise Py Crust?

Eugen. And to learn the top of your skill in Syrrup, Sweetmeat, *Aqua Mirabilis*, and Snayl water.

Clara. Or your great Cunning in Cheese cake, several Creams and Almond butter.

Prisc. Ay, ay, and 't were better for all the Gentlemen in England that Wives had no other breeding, but you had Musick and Dancing.

Eugen. Yes, an ignorant, illiterate, hopping Puppy, that rides his Dancing Circuit thirty Miles about, lights off his tyred steed, draws his Kit at a poor Country creature, and gives her a Hich in her Pace, that she shall never recover.

Clara. And for Musick an old hoarse singing man riding ten miles from his Cathedral to Quaver out the Glories of our Birth and State, or it may be a Scotch Song more hideous and barbarous than an Irish Cronan.

Eugen. And another Musick Master from the next town to Teach one to twinkle out *Lilly burlero* upon an old pair of Virginals, that sound worse than a Tinker's Kettle that cries for his work on.

We happen to have somewhat more definite knowledge of one early eighteenth-century school for girls. Mrs. Hannah Wood, the "Mistress of a College-Boarding School" in Bury, in 1723, was the sister of Mr. D. Bellamy who wrote "Dramatic Entertainments" for the "Annual Public Exercises of the School." These "Entertainments" were published with a dedication to Mrs. Wood, "A Prefatory Essay," and some "Familiar Letters." Mr. Bellamy considers it the particular province of Mrs. Wood "to polish Nature," since she has "a perfect Idea of every Female Accomplishment" and if her young ladies can be "One Virtue the better" through his labors it is ample reward.

Mr. Bellamy's plays were rather elaborately staged. There were "pastoral figure dances" and considerable singing. One character enters "drest like a Gentleman." There is a machine for the descent of Apollo. The dramas performed are carefully adapted to young ladies, "the porcelaine-clay of humankind."

Mr. Bellamy examines every word and weighs each thought to see that "The sence is Chast and inoffensive to nicest tast." The first of the plays given is *Vanquish'd Love: or, The Jealous Queen*, an adaptation of the *Rosamund* of Addison. The emphasis on warm passions, amorous prayers, guilty fires, rage, jealousy, vengeance, and death, would but doubtfully contribute to the delicate innocence of the young ladies. All is, however, made right by the abrupt and unnatural repentance of King Henry, and his eulogy of the sweets of "Virtuous Love." The second play, *Innocence Betray'd; or, The Royal Imposter*, was taken from Cowley's *Love's Riddle*. In the Epilogue a young lady says the auditors may

> Wish we had Rehears'd our Spelling Books:
> And think our Time had been much better spent
> In Cross-Stitch, Irish-Stitch, or at the Tent.

And Mr. Bellamy is quite conscious that some indulgent and timorous parents may censure his designs of teaching young ladies to speak before an audience:

> There are too many, I know, are of Opinion, that the *Art of Pronunciation* is no Female Accomplishment; that the Ladies were design'd by Nature for the Objects of Sight only; and that to encourage them in Dramatic Representations, is to offer Violence to their native Modesty. . . .
>
> 'T was an Observation of One of the most learned Prelates of his Age, the late Archbishop of Cambray, That the general Mistake of Parents in the Education of their Daughters, was this; "That they were too solicitous about the Ornament of their Person, and too remiss, if not entirely regardless, of the Endowments of their Mind."
>
> 'T is pity methinks that the favourite Works of Nature should be nothing but moving Pictures, and, like Sir *Godfrey Kneller's* Canvas, as Mr. Dryden expresses it, only *Look a Voice;* that the Study of the Toilet should be recommended to them, as their most material Accomplishment, whilst the Improvement of their Judgment is neglected as a Trifle, and the early Exercise of their Rational Faculties esteem'd, if not a Crime, an Act of Imprudence and ill Conduct.

In the presentation of the play the young ladies are urged to enter into the characters they have taken, and to remember the

reverence and respect they owe their auditors. Under more specific directions Mr. Bellamy says:

> In the first place, Ladies, carefully avoid all unnatural Distortions both of your Limbs and Features. Wry mouths, contracted Brows, shrug'd up shoulders, and the like are Farce and Buffoonry, very disagreeable and very ungenteel: Nay, Coughing and Spitting, unless very accidental, are vicious Habits, and ought betimes to be corrected.

Among "Useful Observations" is the following on modulation of the voice:

> All Persons Names, viz., I, Thou, He, She, We, Ye, and They, etc. and their following States, Me, Thee, Him, Her, Us, You, and Them, etc. and their Possessives, My, Thy, Our, Yours, Theirs, Mine, Thine, etc. and all Epithets, Adjectives, or Qualities, by which Substantives, Beings, or Things are explain'd and distinguish'd as, Black, White, Good, Bad, Round, Square, and the like, should always be read or spoken with a clear, open, and distinct Voice, as they are for the most part very emphatical, and the Beauty of Expression depends much upon them.

In a letter on "Female Accomplishments" the Virtuous and Fair Antiope in the twenty-second book of Fénelon's *Telemachus* is set forth as an example of a lady of the first quality. Her silence, modesty, reservedness, gentleness, her assiduous industry in spinning and embroidering, her regularity and order and poise, make her a treasure worthy to be sought in far regions. In the letter on "Innocent Recreations" reading is particularly commended. The "chaste and very useful" collection of books suggested is based on the Postscript to Dr. Hickes's *Instructions for the Education of a Daughter*, and is as follows:

> The whole Duty of Man, The Lady's Calling, The Government of the Tongue, Mr. Nelson's Companion for the Feast and Fasts of the Church of England, Meditations and Soliloquies of St. Augustine, Comber and Bennet on the Liturgy, Mr. Boyle on the Style of the Scriptures. Tillotson's Sermons, Paradise Lost with Addison's judicious and entertaining Remarks, Blackmore's Paraphrase on Job, Cowley's Davideis.

For the gayer part of poetry,

Mr. Waller, Mr. Cowley's *Mistress*, some pieces of Mr. Prior, particularly his *Henry* and *Emma*. Mr. Norris's *Miscellany*, and Mr. Watts's *Horæ Lyricæ*. For precepts of Morality I would lay before her Sir Roger L'Estrange's *Seneca* and his *Fables;* Mr. Collier's *Essays* and his *Antoninus* and some select pieces of the Letters and Spectators.

For history, Lord Clarendon on the *Rebellion* and Dr. Welwood's *Memoirs* are suggested.

For novels, the *Adventures of Telemachus*, translated by Mr. Ozell; and *Don Quixot* by Mr. Motteux, Mr. Congreve, and others, are the only Pieces that I would offer to her. For Plays, tho' there are too many unfit for a young Lady's Perusal: yet such as *Cato, Love and Empire, Tamerlane*, the *Mourning Bride*, the *Distress'd Mother, Phædra and Hippolitus*, and the *Conscious Lovers*, with many more, can never be read without Pleasure and Improvement.

Schools for young ladies increased in number during the eighteenth century, especially near London. Malcolm, in 1808, said that even so early as 1759

two or three houses might be seen in almost every village, with the inscription, "Young Ladies boarded and educated," where every description of tradesmen sent their children to be instructed, not in the useful attainments necessary for humble life, but the arts of coquetry and self-consequence — in short, those of a *young lady*. The person who received the children had then the sounding title of Governess: and French and Dancing-masters prepared the girl for the hour when contempt for her parents' deficiencies was to be substituted for affection and respect. Instead of reading their native language with propriety and just emphasis, it was totally neglected, and in place of nervous sentences and flowing periods, the vulgarisms of low life were continued; while the lady repeated familiar words of the French language with a sound peculiar to Boarding-schools, and quite unintelligible to a native of France: the pleasing labours of the needle were thrown aside, and the young lady soon became an adept in imitating laces and spoiling the beauty of coloured silks.[1]

The *Idler* in 1750 comments on female education as spoiling girls for service:

[1] Malcolm, Jas. P.: *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. I, p. 328.

Scarcely a wench was to be got for all work, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of waiting-maid, or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long ruffles and to sit at work in the parlor window.

2. Charity Schools

In 1698 the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge started a movement for the establishment of charity schools. An organized propaganda for getting subscriptions was undertaken by the bishops and was so successful that between 1698 and 1715 more than one hundred of these schools were established in London and Westminster. In this scheme poor girls were considered as well as poor boys. They were, of course, in separate schools.[1] Each school had a prescribed uniform and the pupils marching in a body made a picturesque addition to many a civic festival. In 1714 Thoresby went to hear "the Bishop of London preach the charity sermon before an almost innumerable company of poor children, decently clad in various colours, which are Christianly educated and cared for in the several wards of the city, both for soul and body."[2] In 1723 he again records seeing the Lord Mayor in all his pomp going to St. Bride's Church with a great train of charity children, all decently habited, some with blue coats with yellow vests, others brown, most with blue caps, but some with white hats and mathematical instruments in their hands.[3] By 1753 the number of charity children that went to Christ Church to hear the Anniversary Sermon was five thousand. William Blake, in *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and in *Songs of Experience* (1799), gives the impression of great numbers. In the first of these commemorations Blake voices what was the general attitude, and that is a eulogy of London's magnificent generosity. The second one represents a much more modern tone, that of question as to a city's social and civic standards

[1] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. 24, p. 370.
[2] Thoresby: *Diary*, May 20, 1714. [3] *Ibid.*, April 15, 1723.

where the supply of helpless orphans was so large and so constant.

The word education is too pretentious for most of these schools. The purpose in the main was to train boys and girls for service. In the pictures drawn by Hogarth in 1741 in honor of Captain Coram's noble charity, *The Foundling Hospital*, the three little girls in the foreground are holding a spinning-wheel, a sampler, and a broom, indicating branches of industry to which they were destined.

There were also many privately endowed schools in various parts of England. In 1726 William Law, the author of *The Serious Call*, brought out a treatise on *Christian Perfection*. It is said that an anonymous stranger presented him with £1000 on reading it. The next year Law founded a school for fourteen girls at King's Cliffe, and the money is supposed to have come from this gift. When Archibald Hutcheson died in 1740 he expressed a wish that his widow should lead a retired and religious life under Law's guidance. Miss Hester Gibbon joined Mrs Hutcheson. Their joint income was £2600 a year, most of which they planned to spend in charity. In 1744 they settled down in King's Cliffe in Law's house, formerly a royal manor house and known as "King John's Palace," where they continued the girls' school, and added to it a school for eighteen boys. The important schools in Yorkshire founded by Lady Elizabeth Hastings have already been mentioned.

Other more private and personal and less permanent educational ventures are occasionally recorded. A religious family school something after the fashion of Little Gidding was now and then attempted. One "religious retirement" is mentioned by Bishop Ken. Two dear friends whom he frequently visited were Mary and Anne Kemys of Cefn Mably, Glamorganshire. After the death of their mother in 1683 they went to reside at Naish Court, about a mile from Porteshead. There they established a kind of Anglican sisterhood where they lived a devout life and did charitable works. Bishop Ken was their spiritual adviser, and since he had known Nicholas Ferrar well,

it is not unlikely that the ideals at Naish Court were somewhat like those at Little Gidding.[1] In 1698 Sir George Wheler brought out a tractate entitled *A Protestant Monastery, or Christian Œconomics*, containing *Directions for the Religious Conduct of a Family*. He founded and endowed a school for girls at Houghton-le-Springs, Durham, when he was rector there. Sir George Wheler was an intimate friend and a disciple of Dr. Hickes with whom he went abroad. It was evidently through the influence of Dr. Hickes that he became an advocate of higher education for women.

About the middle of the century Mrs. Montagu went to Bath-Easton to visit her sister, Mrs. Scott, and Lady Bab Montagu, who had chosen a life of retirement and good works. On her return to Sandleford, Mrs. Montagu wrote as follows to Mr. Gilbert West:

> My sister rises early, and as soon as she has read prayers to their small family, she sits down to cut out and prepare work for 12 poor girls, whose schooling they pay for; to those whom she finds more than ordinarily capable, she teaches writing and arithmetic herself. The work these children are usually employed in is making child-bed linen and clothes for poor people in the neighborhood, which Lady Bab Montagu and she bestow as they see occasion. Very early on Sunday morning these girls, with 12 little boys whom they also send to school, come to my sisters and repeat their catechism, read some chapters, have the principal articles of their religion explained to them, and then are sent to the parish church. These good works are often performed by the Methodist ladies in the best of enthusiasm, but thank God, my sister's is a calm and rational piety. Her conversation is lively and easy, and she enters into all the reasonable pleasures of Society; goes frequently to the plays, and sometimes to balls, etc. They have a very pretty house at Bath for the winter, and one at Bath Easton for the summer; their houses are adorned by the ingenuity of the owners, but as their income is small, they deny themselves unnecessary expences. My sister seems very happy; it has pleased God to lead her to truth, by the road of affliction; but what draws the sting of death and triumphs over the grave, cannot fail to heal the wounds of disappointment. Lady Bab Montagu concurs with her in all these

[1] Plumptre, Dean: *Life of Bishop Ken.*

things, and their convent, for by its regularity it resembles one, is really a cheerful place.[1]

3. Higher Education

The lesser boarding-schools and the charity schools give no intimation of anything even approximating the higher education of women. But that topic was not neglected. And it is of interest to take up in chronological sequence the various expressions of opinion as to the kind of education women should have.

Anna van Schurman (1607-1678)

The first influential writer advocating a large and liberal curriculum for women was a foreigner,[2] the famous Anna van Schurman of Utrecht. She was, indeed, the most famous learned woman of the seventeenth century, not only in Holland, but in the entire world of letters. As a child she gave such indication of unusual power that her father's interest and ambition were aroused, and he gave her perfect freedom and sympathetic coöperation in the development of her tastes. There was no regular plan or discipline in her education. She merely followed out, in art, in handicrafts, in letters, every new interest of her singularly alert and responsive mind. Till she was twenty-eight, art in some form was her chief occupation. She carved portraits in boxwood, modeled them in wax, etched them on glass or copper, and cut medallions in ivory. She did fine needlework and intricate embroidery, and worked tapestry. Specimens of her scissors-work are still preserved in the Schurman museum at Franeker and show a dexterity that must have been remarkable even in that day of exquisite cut-paper.[3] And she excelled in

[1] "Mrs. Scott described their life in her novel, *Millennium Hall, by a Gentleman on his travels*, 1762, as there was a popular prejudice then against a female author." Mrs. Sarah Scott (the widow of George Lewis Scott) wrote several novels, under the pseudonym "Henry Augustus Raymond," between 1750 and 1776. *Millennium Hall* reached a fourth edition by 1778.

[2] Birch, Una: *Anna van Schurman : Artist ; Scholar ; Saint.*

[3] Cut-paper work was an accomplishment in which ladies of various countries took pride. Deschamps in his account of painters mentions a Mrs. Block. He

the fashionable accomplishment of writing in foreign alphabets. She sang delightfully, and played on the cymbal, the lute, and the violin. Her interest in the technical side of music is evidenced by her correspondence with noted musicians such as Huyghens, Hooft, and Bannius.

But gradually during the amateurish delights of these occupations and through the frivolities of a gay life there had been growing in Anna's mind a desire for serious work. And from twenty-eight to forty-eight she gave herself to the learned pursuits on which her contemporary renown was based. She became known throughout Europe and the most extravagant recognition was accorded her. As the finest Latinist in Utrecht she was chosen to write the ode on the founding of the University in that city. She was named the "Star of Utrecht." Gisbert Voët, the Rector of the University, taught her Hebrew, Syriac, and Chaldee, and influenced her to devote years to a textual study of the Bible. Beverwyck, who through admiration for her had become a convinced feminist, dedicated his treatise *De Excellentia Fœmini Sexus* to her as "the most wonderful woman of her day." Cats wrote poems to her as the *Wonderstuk* of the age. Her *Ethiopian Grammar* was greeted as a marvel by the scholars of the Dutch universities. Jean Louis Balzac congratulated himself on coming to know "*cette merveilleuse fille*." Descartes was one of her close friends. She

says she "excelled in cutting paper; whatever others produced in a print by a graver, she produced with a pair of scissors; she executed all kinds of subjects, as landscapes, sea-pieces, animals, flowers; and what is most astonishing, portraits, in which the resemblance was preserved in the highest degree. This new art of expressing representations of objects upon white paper became the object of universal curiosity, and the artist was encouraged by all the courts of *Europe*. The Elector *Palatine* offered her a thousand florins (equal to about a hundred guineas) for three little pieces, which she refused. . . . The works of this woman are in design and taste extremely correct, and may best be compared with the engravings of Mallon. When they are pasted upon black paper, the places where the white paper is cut away in strokes, represent those of a graver or pen, and are in the highest degree neat, true, bold, and distinct." (*The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1761, p. 338). The cut-work paper in England never equalled that of Mrs. Block until Mrs. Delany's herbarium in the late eighteenth century out-distanced all competitors. But Mrs. Delany's work was more like painting while Mrs. Block's was like engraving.

corresponded on terms of equality with theologians like Jacob Lydius and Fredereck Spanheim and M. de Saumaise of Leyden University. Caspar van Baerle eulogized her as "a second Sempronia, a better Sappho, a new Pallas." She became almost an object of pilgrimage, royal personages being among those attracted by her great fame. The Queen of Poland, the Duchesse de Longueville, and Christina of Sweden with an escort of Jesuit priests were among those who made visits of state to "the incomparable Virgin."

The last twenty years of Anna van Schurman's life were given entirely to mystical religion under the guidance of Jean de Labadie of whose community she became the most influential member. But in the preceding period many topics of contemporary interest held her attention. Chief among these was the right of women to free mental development. Dr. Rivet, Professor of Theology at Leyden, and her intimate friend, once wrote to her that ordinary women were debarred from equality with men by "the sacred laws of Nature." Anna responded in lively protest and said that he based his arguments on custom and not on reason. In time she wrote a book embodying her own views on the subject. It was published by Elzevir at Leyden in 1641 under the title *De ingenii muliebris ad doctrinam et meliores litteras aptitudine.* In 1659 the book was translated into rather stiff and cumbersome English, by "C. B.," doubtless Clement Barksdale, an Oxford man, a prolific translator from the Latin and much interested in education. He was master of a free school at Hereford, and later had a successful private school at Hawling in Cotswolds. He must have had especial interest in the education of women, for in 1675 he wrote a *Letter touching a College of Maids or a Virgin Society.* Mr. Barksdale's translation appeared under the title, *The Learned Maid; or, Whether a Maid may be a Scholar. Logick Exercise Written in Latine by that incomparable Virgin Anna Maria ā Schurman of Utrecht. With some Epistles to the famous Gassendus and others.* The book opens with a quotation from Fr. Spanhemius in which he eulogizes Anna van Schurman as "the

utmost Essay of Nature in this Sex." The translation is dedicated to the "Lady A. H.," probably the Lady Anne Hudson to whom Gerbier dedicated his *Elogium Heroinum.* There had evidently been an earlier translation than Barksdale's, for he says, "This *strange maid,* being now the second time drest up in her *English Habit,* cometh to kiss your hand." Two translations into English within eighteen years indicate a considerable interest in the arguments advanced. Yet the form of the book was difficult and unattractive as is indicated by the phrase "Logick Exercise." Every argument is thrown into stiff syllogistic form. The portion of the book entitled "A Refutation to the Adversaries" is somewhat more natural and lively. Stripped of their pedantry the arguments against the education of women and the answers to these arguments are as follows:

Objection: The wits of women are too weak for the study of letters.

Answer: Not all men have "heroical wits" yet they are not excluded from studies. No claim is made that all women should study, but only those of "at least indifferent good wits." Weakness of wit may be aided by study.

Objection: Women have no opportunity to prosecute studies, no academies or schools being open to them.

Answer: There are parents and tutors.

Objection: Knowledge is a useless acquirement since women are shut out from "Politicall, Eclesiasticall, or Academicall" offices.

Answer: Though they gain not the Primary end of public usefulness they yet gain an important secondary personal end.

Objection: Since a little knowledge will suffice for a woman in her vocation an "Encyclopædy" of knowledge is superfluous.

Answer: There is ambiguity in the word "vocation." Does it mean that woman belongs to private as against public life? Then many gentlemen in private life should be shut out from studies. Does it mean woman's special calling to Family Life? But all human beings have a right to a personal development, a "Universal Calling" separate from and above their special vocation.

Objection: Women do not care for studies, and nothing should "be done *invitâ Minervâ,* as we say, Against the Hair."

Answer: The assumption that women do not care to apply themselves to studies becomes logically important only when it is proved of women after excitation and opportunity in studies. "No man can rightly judge of our Inclination to studies, before he hath encouraged

us by the best reasons and means to set upon them: and withall hath given us some *taste* of their sweetness."

The arguments given and the objections answered lead to the statement:

Wherefore our *Thesis* stands firm: *A Christian Maid*, or *Woman may conveniently give herself to Learning:* Whence we draw this Consectary, that Maids may and ought to be excited and encouraged by the best and strongest *Reasons*, by the *Testimonies* of wise men: and lastly by the *examples* of *illustrious Women*, to the embracing of this kind of life, especially *those* who are above others provided of *leisure*, and other *means* and *aides* for their *studies*. And, because it is best, that the mind being seasoned with *Learning* from the very Infancy: therefore the *Parents* themselves are chiefly to be stirred up, as we suppose, and to be admonished of their duty.

In a presentation of the appropriate range of the studies of women Anna includes the entire circle of Liberal Arts and Sciences as convenient for the Head of a Christian Maid.

But specially let regard be had unto those Arts which have neerest alliance to *Theology* and the *Moral Virtues*, and are Principally subservient to them. In which number we reckon *Grammar*, *Logick*, *Rhetoric:* especially *Logick*, fitly called *The Key of all Sciences:* and then, *Physicks*, *Metaphysicks*, *History*, etc. and also the knowledge of Languages, chiefly of the *Hebrew* and *Greek*. All which may advance to the more facile and full understanding of *Holy Scriptures:* to say nothing now of other Books. The rest, i.e. *Mathematicks*, (to which is also referred *Musick*) *Poesie*, *Picture*, and the like, not illiberal Arts, may obtain the place of pretty Ornaments and ingenious Recreations. Lastly, those studies which pertain to the practice of the Law, Military Discipline, Oratory in the Church, Court, University, as less proper and less necessary, we do not very much urge. And yet we in no wise yield that our *Maid* should be excluded from the Scholastick Knowledge or Theory of those; especially not from understanding the most noble Doctrine of the *Politicks* or Civil Government.

The whole book is a eulogy of learning as a specific for all the ills of mind or heart. Anna quotes from the great Erasmus to the effect that "nothing takes so full possession of the fair Temple of a Virgin's breast, as learning and study, whither, on all occasions she may fly for refuge," and hence nothing can so

effectually oppose vanity and light-mindedness. Studies will make a woman sufficient unto herself in leisure hours. Studies perfect and adorn the intellect; they conduce to reverence for the most beautiful, the most excellent, and so to love of God; they fortify the mind against heresies, they teach prudence, they destroy fear, they put courage into the heart; they give a delight that is like "Divine gladness"; and they mollify and sweeten manners. In fine, the liberal pursuit of learning brings the whole nature into conformity with "the Rule of right reason." Who, then, would shut women out from delights so laudable, virtues so desirable?

The whole book gives such an impression of high-minded earnestness, it is so strenuous and sincere, affirmative arguments are so elaborately established, and adversaries are so elaborately crushed, that it becomes a distinct anti-climax to realize what, after all, was the extent of her demand. She virtually asks nothing more than that rich girls of good minds shall be allowed and even encouraged to study at home under tutors, with the proviso that they make no public use of their learning, that they remember St. Paul's injunction to women "to be *οἰκουργός*, keepers at home," and that they make learning the handmaid of piety. Anna van Schurman was asking for what she herself had had. And her conception seems somewhat less modest when we realize that no scholastic dignities, no authorship, no public offices, could put a woman of today so distinctly in the lime-light of royal and learned favor as was this retiring Anna in her quiet little home at Utrecht.

Bathsua Pell, Mrs. Makin (fl. 1641-1673)

The immediate follower of Anna van Schurman was Bathsua Pell, better known as Mrs. Makin.[1] She is one of the most significant personages connected with the education of girls in the mid-seventeenth century. Her father was a rector in Southwick, Sussex.

[1] Monroe, Paul: *Cyclopædia of Education;* Watson, Foster: "Mrs. Bathsua Makin and the Education of Gentlewomen," *Atalanta*, July, 1895; Granger: *Biographical History* (2d ed.), vol. II, p. 392; Ballard: *Memoirs*, Preface; Jesse: *House of Stuart*, vol. II, p. 250.

Constantia Coronat
Sol Iustitiæ
BATHSUA MAKIN PRINCIPE ELIZAB: LATINIS, GRÆCIS, & HEBRÆIS
Forma nihil, si Pulchra perit; sed Pectoris alma
Divini species, non moritura viget
W. M. sculpsit

MRS. BATHSUA MAKIN

"Facsimile copy from an almost unique print by Marshall." From an engraving in Woodburn's *Gallery of Rare Portraits*, 1816, Vol. II, page 39

He died in 1616 and his wife in 1617, leaving three children. Thomas became gentleman of the bedchamber to Charles I, but went to America in 1635. The younger brother, John (1611–1685), was early noted as a student. At thirteen he entered Trinity at Cambridge, being even then "as good a scholar as some masters of arts." At twenty he was reported to know Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Italian, French, High and Low Dutch. By the time he was twenty-three he had specialized in mathematics. He held important mathematical posts under Cromwell; and, later, under Charles II, he was given a valuable living. Bathsua Pell had her brother's talent for languages, and like him had an early repute for learning. About 1641, when she was perhaps about thirty, she was appointed tutoress to Princess Elizabeth, the six-year-old daughter of Charles I. The learned tutoress was apparently at liberty to follow her own ideas of education, and for several years she led the sad little Princess into such delights as might be found in the languages and theology. She boasted of her pupil's proficiency, saying that at nine she could "write, read, and in some measure understand, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Italian."[1] Mrs. Makin had other distinguished pupils. Among them was Lucy Davies, daughter to Sir John Davies, Attorney-General for Ireland, and better known as author of *Nosce Teipsum*, and Eleanor Truchett, fluent author of half-mad books of prophecy.[2] Lucy married the sixth Earl of Huntington. After his death in 1655, when their son was but six years old, as Countess Dowager of Huntington, she evidently gave her time and interest in her retirement to the studies begun under Mrs. Makin (possibly in the Putney Schools before 1649), who says of her in 1673: "I am forbidden to mention the Countess *Dow-*

[1] Some light is thrown on the curious phrase "read, write, and in some measure understand," by William Greenhill's dedication of his *Exposition of the first five chapters of Ezekiel* to the Princess Mary in 1644–45. After mentioning other instances of feminine precocity he praises her for "writing out the Lord's Prayer in Greek and some texts of Scripture in Hebrew." It was calligraphy rather than language that was here in question.

[2] See p. 37.

ager of Huntington (instructed sometimes by Mrs. Makin) howe well she understands *Latin*, *Greek*, *Hebrew*, *French* and *Spanish ;* or what a proficient she is in Arts, subservient to Divinity, in which (if I durst I would tell you) she excells."

Mrs. Makin makes enthusiastic mention of other learned ladies, but does not make it clear whether they had been under her instruction. Lady Mildmay could not, she says, be justly omitted. Then there was Mrs. Thorold, daughter of Lady Carr in Lincolnshire, who was "excellent in Philosophy, and all sorts of Learning." She cites also "Dr. Love's daughters," [1] as "still fresh in the memory of men" for their "Worth and Excellency in Learning."

In April, 1649, John Evelyn and a party of ladies visited "the schools or colleges for gentlewomen" at Putney. In all probability Mrs. Makin had charge of this institution. Certainly no other known Englishwoman would have been so competent, or would have had such prestige as a school-mistress, and her *Essay* of 1673 shows that she remained in the educational field. Accompanying the *Essay* is a *Prospectus* for a school she had recently opened. "If any enquire where this education may be performed, such may be informed that a school is lately erected for Gentlewomen, at Tottenham High Cross, within four miles of London, on the road to Ware, where Mrs. Makin is governess who was formerly tutoress to the Princess Elizabeth, daughter to King Charles the First. Where, by the blessing of God, Gentlewomen may be instructed in the *Principles* of *religion*, and in all manner of sober and virtuous Education: more particularly in all things ordinarily taught in other schools." These things "ordinarily taught in other schools" are listed as "Dancing, Musick, Singing, Writing, Keeping accompts." Half the time in Mrs. Makin's school was to be spent on this portion of the curri-

[1] Probably daughters of Dr. Nicholas Love (d. 1630), Head-Master of Winchester College in 1601, and chaplain to James I. In 1673 the daughters of Christopher Love (1618–1651), Puritan minister from Cardiff, would be of too recent date to correspond to the description.

culum. The other half was to be "employed in gaining the *Latin* and *French* tongues." Greek, Hebrew, Italian, and Spanish were optional subjects, but were offered by the Governess who had a "competent knowledge" of all of them. The language requirements could not have been extensive since "Gentlewomen of eight or nine years old, that can read well, may be instructed in a year or two (according to their parts) in the *Latin* and *French* tongues." Something in the way of natural history was attempted. Mrs. Makin announces, "*Repositories* also for Visibles shall be prepared; by which, from beholding the things, Gentlewomen may learn the Names, Natures, Values, and Use of *Herbs*, *Shrubs*, *Trees*, *Mineral-pieces*, *Metals*, and *Stones*," a sort of laboratory course in botany and mineralogy. Astronomy, geography, and especially arithmetic and history were also offered in a "general" way. Domestic science was not omitted, though oddly bound up with a course in art: "Those that please may learn Limning, Preserving, Pastry, and Cookery." The principle of electives was in full force. "Those that think one language enough for a Woman, may forbear the Languages, and learn only Experimental Philosophy." In fact, students were allowed to take "more or fewer" of the courses offered as they might incline. The regular rate was twenty pounds per annum, but a "competent improvement in the Tongues, and the other things aforementioned" was to command an additional fee. Very astutely Mrs. Makin constituted the parents the judge as to the excellency of their children's attainments. The notice closes with this fair offer: "Those that think these Things Improbable, or Impracticable may have further account every *Tuesday*, at Mr. Mason's Coffee-house, in Cornhill, near the Royal Exchange; and *Thursdays*, at the 'Bolt and Tun,' in Fleet Street, between the hours of three and six in the afternoon, by some person whom Mrs. Makin shall appoint." [1]

[1] This person was a Mr. M. Lewis whose *Grammar* and whose *Rules for Pointing and Reading Grammatically* she used in her school.

This course of study, desultory, inchoate, fragmentary, as it is, is nevertheless of great historic interest. It is the first known attempt to organize a scheme of definite and solid study for girls. However superficial the work, it was based on a novel and important conception of the value of genuine knowledge in languages and science for girls as well as for boys. It must have been as doubtful and epoch-making an event in a community to have its girls sent to Tottenham High Cross, as for the earliest students to go to Vassar. Unfortunately the inception of this school is all we know about it. A knowledge of its actual work, its success, a list of its students, would serve as an illuminating commentary on the general attitude towards learning for girls in the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

That Mrs. Makin expected opposition is shown by the remarkable *Essay* that was issued with her *Prospectus*. The full title of the *Essay* is, *An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen, in Religion, Manners, Arts, & Tongues, with an Answer to the Objections against this Way of Education. London, Printed by J. D. to be sold by Tho. Parkhurst, at the Bible and Crown, at the lower end of Cheapside.* 1673. In her opening paragraphs Mrs. Makin recognizes that an age in which "Learning and Virtue are counted Pedantick Things, fit only for the Vulgar" is not a propitious time to undertake an advanced scheme for the education of girls. She trenchantly summarizes the prevalent attitude towards learned women; and then bravely sets forth her own creed. She also emphasizes the modesty of her demands:

> Custom, when it is inveterate, hath a mighty influence: it hath the force of Nature itself. The Barbarous custom to breed Women low, is grown general amongst us, and hath prevailed so far, that it is verily believed (especially amongst a cort of debauched Sots) that Women are not endued with such reason, as Men; nor capable of improvement by Education, as they are. It is lookt upon as a monstrous thing, to pretend the contrary. A Learned Woman is thought to be a Comet, that bodes Mischief, when ever it appears. To offer to the World the liberal Education of Women is to deface the Image of God in Man, it

will make Women so high, and men so low, like Fire in the House-tops it will set the whole world in a Flame. These things and worse than these, are commonly talked of, and verily believed by many, who think themselves wise Men: to contradict these is a bold attempt; where the Attempter must expect to meet with much opposition. . . . I verily think, Women were formerly Educated in the knowledge of Arts and Tongues, and by their Education, many did rise to a great height in Learning. Were Women thus educated now, I am confident the advantage would be very great: the Women would have Honour and Pleasure, their Relations Profit, and the whole Nation Advantage. . . . Were a competent number of Schools erected to Educate Ladyes ingenuously, methinks I see how ashamed Men would be of their Ignorance, and how industrious the next Generation would be to wipe off their Reproach. I expect to meet with many Scoffes and Taunts from inconsiderate and illiterate Men, that prize their own Lusts and Pleasure more than your Profit and Content. I shall be the less concern'd at these, so long as I am in your favour; and this discourse may be a Weapon in your hands to defend yourselves, whilst you endeavour to polish your Souls, that you may glorify God, and answer the end of your Creation, to be meet helps to your Husbands. Let not your Ladiships be offended, that I do not (as some have wittily done) plead for Female Preëminence. To ask too much is the way to be denied all. God hath made Man the Head, if you be educated and instructed, as I propose, I am sure you will acknowledge it, and be satisfied that you are helps, that your Husbands do consult and advise with you (which if you be wise they will be glad of) and that your Husbands have the casting-Voice, in whose determinations you will acquiesce.

The main portion of the *Essay* is addressed to a "much-honoured and worthy friend" who has expressed considerable doubt as to the wisdom of her educational projects. The tone of his letter is indicated by the following summary:

Your great question is, Whether to breed up Women in Arts and Tongues, is not a mere new Device, never before practised in the World. This you doubt the more: Because Women are of low Parts, and not capable of Improvement by this Education. If they could be improved, you doubt, whether it would benefit them? If it would benefit them, you enquire where such Education may be had? or, whether they must go to School with Boys? to be made twice more impudent than learned. At last you muster up a Legion of Objections.

These doubts and objections are then discussed *seriatim*. To establish her contention that women have been educated in

arts and sciences in the past she gives an unchronological, uncritical list of women who attained distinction in Greece and Rome and in Bible times. Miriam, "a great poet and philosopher," the women who danced before David (singing songs "compos'd it's like by themselves"), Huldah the Prophetess, "who dwelt (we may suppose) in a college where women were bred up in good literature"; Anna and Phebe; Triphena, Triphosa, and Persis; Priscilla who instructed Apollos; Timothy's mother Eunice and grandmother Lois; and Philip's four daughters, make up from Sacred Writ a list intended to allay the anxieties of a devout churchman as to the effect of learning on female piety. Mrs. Makin was really forced to get as many Biblical recruits as possible, since her opponents regularly massed their forces in the Garden of Eden with the Sin of Eve as their impregnable fort.

To the lay mind examples from classic lands might prove authoritative, hence there follows a list of Greek and Roman ladies of learning. If the heroes of ancient story are but idealized representations of actual men, why, reasons Mrs. Makin, may we not suppose some actual wise women as the begetters of the legends of Minerva, the Muses, and the Sibyls? From history she cites "Sempronia, Cornelia, Lelia, Mutia, Cleobulina, Cassandra, Terentia, Hortensia, Sulpitia, Portia, Helvitia, Enonia, Paula, Albina, Pella, Jenobia, Voleria, Proba, Eudocia, Claudia," and many others; a list too undiscriminating to be convincing, but certainly creditable to Mrs. Makin's industrious learning. After this wide preliminary sweep, Mrs. Makin takes up different realms of attainment. "Women have been good Linguists"; "Women have been good Oratours"; "Women have understood Logic"; "Women have been profound Philosophers"; "Some Women have understood the Mathematics"; "Women have been good Poets"; "Women have been good Divines" — such are the theses she is prepared to defend. The mathematics are most thinly provided with examples, Hypatia of Alexandria and "A Lady of late, her name I have forgot," who printed divers tables, being the only

instances she can summon. The richest assemblage of names comes under the linguists and the poets. The purpose of this ardent and prolonged search of times past and present is to show that women are not by act of creation always of "low parts"; that some, indeed, have approached the standards set by men. This being the case, women should have full educational opportunities. Mrs. Makin is careful, however, to hedge in even this proposition with qualifications. Education belongs only to the Christian maid, to the maid of excellent mind, to the maid of wealth and leisure. A woman's education is for her own development and pleasure and for the service of her family. Any social, public, utilitarian use of it is not for a moment contemplated. A further qualification is that education is not absolutely essential:

> I do not mean that it is necessary to the *esse*, to the *subsistence*, or to the salvation of women, to be thus educated. Those that are mean in the world have not the opportunity for this education. Those that are of low parts, though they have opportunity, cannot reach this. *Ex quovis ligno not fit Minerva.* My meaning is, persons that God hath blessed with the things of this world, that have competent natural parts, ought to be educated in knowledge. That is, it is much better they should spend the time of their youth to be competently instructed in those things usually taught to gentlewomen at schools, and the over-plus of their time to be spent in gaining arts and tongues and useful knowledge, rather than to trifle away so many precious minutes, merely to polish their hands and feet, to curl their locks, to dress and trim their bodies.

With these limitations the proposition may be allowed to stand that the virtuous, talented woman of leisure should be granted educational advantages. But there are objections still to be met. The more important of these may be summarized with Mrs. Makin's answers:

> 1. "If we bring up our Daughters to Learning no Persons will adventure to Marry them."
>
> Answer: Learned men would surely choose learned wives, and it will be long before there are learned women enough to overstock the market.

2. "When Solomon praised the good housewife no mention was made of her learning."

Answer: The daily tasks of Solomon's housewife required considerable knowledge. "To buy wool and flax, to dye scarlet and purple, requires skill in Natural Philosophy. To consider a field, the quantity and quality, requires knowledge in Geometry. To plant a vineyard, requires understanding in Husbandry. She could not merchandise without Arithmetic. She could not govern so great a family well without knowledge in Politics and Economics. She could not look well to the ways of her household, except she understood Physic and Chirurgery. She could not open her mouth with wisdom and have in her tongue the law of kindness without Grammar, Rhetoric and Logic." But at the best, Solomon's good housewife seems to Mrs. Makin hardly more than "an honest, well-bred, ingenious, industrious Dutchwoman," not at all the sort of talented gentlewoman of the leisure classes for whom the new liberal education is to be provided.

3. "Women are of ill Natures, and will abuse their Education."

Answer: Men also abuse their Education.

4. "They will be proud and not obey their Husbands; they will be pragmatick and boast of their Parts and Improvements."

Answer: "To this I Answer; What is said of Philosophy, is true of Knowledge; a little Philosophy carries a man from God, but a great deal brings him back again; a little knowledge, like windy Bladders, puffs up, but a good measure of true knowledge, like Ballast in a Ship, settles down, and makes a person more even in his station; 't is not knowing too much, but too little that causes the irregularity."

5. "The end of Learning is Publick Business" in which women have no concern.

Answer: The private ends of learning are as important as the public ends. Moreover, this objection would apply to all men in private life.

6. "Women do not desire Learning."

Answer: "Neither do many Boys."

7. "Women are of Low Parts."

Answer: "So are many Men."

8. Women are soft, tender, delicate, weak.

Answer: Then strengthen them by Education.

9. A learned gentlewoman is ridiculous because contrary to custom.

Answer: This custom has a bad ground. Men wish women to be fools, that they may remain slaves. A bad custom should be broken that good customs may prevail.

10. The final and crucial objection is elaborately stated: "How shall time be found to teach children these things here proposed? Boys go to school ordinarily from seven till sixteen or seventeen, and

not above one in four attain so much knowledge in the Tongues as to be admitted into the University, where no great accuracy is required, and they learn nothing else usually besides a little History. Gentlewomen will not ordinarlly be sent out so soon, nor is it convenient they should continue so long. Further, half their time, it is supposed, must be spent in learning those things that concern them as Women. Twice as many things are proposed to be taught Girls in half the time, as Boyes do learn, which is impossible."

The rest of the article is taken up with an analysis of Lilly's *Grammar*, to show how slow and burdensome and distasteful are its methods, and to an analysis of the short cuts to knowledge devised by Mrs. Makin and Mr. Lewis. For instance, Lilly's long rule for substantives is simplified into, "Any word with *a*, *an*, or *the* in front of it is a substantive." If you wish to distinguish between a noun and an adjective you have but to note that nouns change when you make a plural, adjectives do not. And so on with many shrewd little tricks of learning whereby the parts of speech may be known at a glance, the nature of said parts of speech not being in question. The whole of Mrs. Makin's scope and plan of education seems superficial and uncoördinated until seen in the light of the contemporary training of boys as she describes it. Then her system seems alive and energetic in its effort to slough off non-essentials.

In passing, Mrs. Makin frequently utters wise and far-seeing opinions concerning the education of girls.

If any desire to know what they should be instructed in? I answer: I cannot tell where to begin to admit Women, nor from what part of Learning to exclude them, in regard of their Capacities. The whole *Encyclopoedia* of Learning may be useful some way or other to them. "Grammar, Rhetorick, Logick, Physick, the Tongues, Mathematics, Geography, History, Musick, Painting, Poetry" — all of these should be open to women, and all could be advantageously used by them.

With regard to the pleasures of the student she says, "Delight and Pleasure are the attendants on Learning."

There is no pleasure greater than what is founded in Knowledge; it is the First Fruits of Heaven, and a glimpse of that Glory we afterwards expect. There is in all an innate desire of knowing, and the

satisfying this is the greatest pleasure. Men are very cruel, that give them leave to look at a distance, only to know they do not know; to make any thus to tantalize is a great torment.

She is especially scornful of the vain and frivolous women of that frivolous age, those women whose time is spent in "making Points for Bravery, in dressing and trimming themselves like Bartholomew-Babies, in Painting and Dancing, in making Flowers of Coloured Straw, and building Houses of stained Paper, and such like vanities."

Poulain de la Barre

A book nearly contemporaneous with Mrs. Makin's *Prospectus* is entitled *The Woman as Good as the Man, or the Equality of Both Sexes. Written originally in French and translated into English by A. L.* The French original was by Poulain de la Barre whose *De l'Egalité des deux Sexes* was published in 1673. The translation by A. L. came out in 1677. The Preface by the author and that by the translator show that they enter upon their work with considerable trepidation, knowing that they write against the general view. The probable opponents are classified as "all the Ignorant and most of the Learned," but the author proceeds valiantly on his mission of enlightenment. "Men," he says, "have always kept women in subjection," moved thereto by a "secret Instinct," as if they had for their own dominance "Letters-Patent from the Author of Nature." Women have likewise accepted the doctrine of their own inferiority so that dependence and subjection have come to seem their normal condition. M. de la Barre states the prevalent idea and his own radical departure from it in the following passage:

Let every Man (in particular) be asked his Thoughts of Women (in general) and that he would surely confess his Mind; he will tell you without doubt, That they were not made but for Man; That they are fit for nothing, but to Nurse and Breed little Children in their Low Ages; and to mind the House. It may be the more Ingenious will add, That there are many Women that have indeed Parts, and Conduct; but that even they who seem to have most, when they are nearly examined, discover still some-what that speaks their Sex: That they

have neither Solidity, nor Constancy; nor that depth of Judgment which they think to find in themselves: And that it hath been an effect of Divine Providence, and Wisdom of Men, to have barred them from Sciences, Government, and Offices: That it would be a pleasant thing indeed, to see a Lady in the Chair (in quality of a Professor) teaching *Rhetorick*, or *Medicine;* marching along the Streets, followed by Officers, and Sergeants; putting in Execution Laws: Playing the part of a Counsellour; pleading before Judges: Seated on a Bench, to Administer Justice in Supream Courts: Leading of an Army; giving Battel; and Speaking before States, and Princes, as the Head of an Embassy.

I do confess, such Practices would surprize us; but for no other reason, but that of Novelty. For, if in modelling of states and establishing the different Offices that compose them, Women had been likewise called to Functions; we should have been as much accustomed to have seen them in Dignity, as they are to see us. And should have found it no more strange to have seen a Lady on a Throne, than a Woman in a Shop.[1]

M. de la Barre admits that many women may properly be accused of "Idleness, Softness, and Ignorance," but gives the astonishingly modern explanation that no fair estimate of the ability of women can be made until they have been trained by right education and stimulated by public responsibility and opportunity. He believes that if women "made it their business to study Law, they would succeed in it (at least) as well as we." "Women seem born to practise Physick." They would excel as "Pastour or Minister in the Church . . . and there can be nothing else but custome shewn, which remove *Women* therefrom. . . . And if men were accustomed to see *Women* in a Pulpit, they would be no more startled thereat, than the *Women* are at the sight of men." Women if rightly educated would show peculiar aptitude for teaching.

If *Women* had studyed in the Universities with men, or in others appointed for them in particular, they might have entered into Degrees, and taken the title of Master of Arts, Doctor of Divinity, Medicine, Civil, and Cannon Law: And their genius so advantageously fitting them to learn, would dispose them to teach with success. They

[1] *The Woman as Good as the Man*, p. 6.

would find methods, and insinuating biasses, to instil their Doctrine; they would discover the strength and weakness of their Schollars, to proportion themseves to their reach, and the facility which they have to express themselves; and, [this] which is one of the most excellent talents of a good Master, would compleat and render them admirable Mistresses.[1]

There is no reason "why a *Woman* of sound Judgment and Understanding, might not take the chaire in a court of Justice, and preside in all other companies." There are no positions of public authority from the throne to the humblest office of state that should not be open to women. Even "the military Art hath nothing beyond others, whereof *Women* are not capable."

That women may become learned is beyond dispute, and they are the more to be praised because of the difficulties they have overcome:

How many Ladies have there been, and how many are there still, who ought to be placed amongst the number of the Learned, if we assigne them not a Higher Sphear? The Age wherein we live hath produced more of these, than all the past. And as they have in all things run parallel with *Men*, upon some Particular Reasons, they ought more to be esteemed than they: For, it behoved them to surmount the Softness wherein their Sex is bred, renounce the Pleasures and Idleness, to which Custom had condemned them, overcome certain public Impediments that removed them from Study, and to get above those disadvantagious Notions, which the Vulgar conceive of the Learned, besides, those of their own Sex in general: All this they have performed. And whether it be, that these Difficulties have rendered their Wit more quick and penetrating, or that these Qualities are the peculiar of their Nature, they have [proportionably] made Progress and Advancements beyond *Men*.[2]

These may be regarded as exceptional women, but "there are infinite numbers of *Women*, which could have done no less, had their Advantages been Equal." But the training given to girls make them believe that beauty and fine clothes should be their only interests. Their education seldom goes beyond writing and reading, and their library consists of a few little books of devotion.

[1] *The Woman as Good as the Man*, p. 124. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

In all that which is taught to *Women*, do we see anything that tends to solid instruction? It seems, on the contrary, that men have agreed on this sort of education, of purpose to abase their courage, darken their mind, and to fill it only with vanity, and fopperies.

It may be said that "Learning would render *Women* more Wicked and Proud." But only false knowledge can produce so bad an effect. True knowledge makes a woman humble and virtuous. It actually "choaks" some men to find women eager after knowledge. These men have "forged to themselves that Women ought not to Study," and they "stand upon their Points, when Women demand to be informed of that which is Learned by Books." But since "Ignorance is the most irksome Slavery," and knowing the truth is a way out of it, all women who seek that way should be praised, not blamed.

"We may [then] with Assurance, exhort Ladies to apply themselves to Study; without having Respect to the little Reasons of those who would undertake to divert them there-from. Since they have a Mind (as well as We) capable of knowing of Truth . . . they ought to put themselves in condition of avoyding the Reproach, of having stifled a Talent, which they might put to use." Learning cannot be counted useless to women even if they do not publicly use it. It is a personal right and necessity like "Felicity and Vertue." "The Spring of reason is not limited; it hath in all men an equal Jurisdiction. . . . Truth and Knowledge are goods that admit of no prescription." And, finally, the economy of the world demands that one half its mentality should not be debarred from the search after Truth.

The sincerity of M. Poulain de la Barre might be put in question by the fact that he wrote in 1675 a book entitled *De l'Excellence des Hommes contre l'Egalité des Sexes*, but the earlier treatise maintained its popularity, for it was republished in 1676, 1690, 1692. Of the English translation but one edition appeared, nor does it seem to have been well known in the seventeenth century. Mary Astell makes no use of it, perhaps because it was too radical and uncompromising in its demand.

Certainly no other defense of feminism even approached the work of M. de la Barre in the relentless logic with which it carried fundamental assumptions into the practical affairs of life.

Dr. George Hickes (1642-1715)

From Marie de Jars to Anna van Schurman, and then to Bathsua Makin is a regular and recognized progression of influence. I am unable to trace any direct influence from Mrs. Makin, though her prestige and the number of her aristocratic pupils must have made her school one of the important factors in establishing new ideas. At any rate, by whatever influences brought about, we have, after about 1680, several significant discussions of liberal education for woman. One of the earliest and most surprising of these comes in a sermon by Dr. George Hickes. Its full title is, *A Sermon Preached at the Church of St. Bridget, on Easter, Tuesday, being the first of April, 1684. Before the Right Honourable Sir Henry Tulse, Lord Mayor of London and Honourable Court of Alderman, Together with the Governors of the Hospital, upon the Subject of Alms-giving. By George Hickes, D. D. Dean of Worcester, and Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty.*

At the close of this sermon on the reasons for alms-giving Dr. Hickes emphasizes the great obligation resting on those "Who heap up Riches, and can not tell who shall gather them, I mean those to whom God hath given great Estates, and no Children." Such people seem to him set apart by Providence for the endowing of works of public beneficence. In a comprehensive analysis of the practical ways in which they could use their wealth we come upon the following remarkable suggestion:

> I will also put you in mind of establishing a Found for Endowing of poor Maids, who have lived so many years in Service, and of building Schools, or Colleges for the Education of young Women, much like unto those in the Universities, for the Education of young Men, but with some alteration in the Discipline, and Oeconomy, as the nature of such an Institution would require.
>
> Such Colleges might be so ordered, as to become security to your Daughters against all the hazard to which they are exposed at private

Schools, and likewise a security to the Government, that the Daughters of the Land should be bred up according to the religion now established in it, to the unconceivable advantage of the Publick, in rooting out *Enthusiasme*, with her Daughter *Schisme*, both of which are upheld by nothing among us as much, as by the Women, who are so silly and deceiveable for want of Ingenious and Orthodox Education, and not for want of Parts. Methinks the Rich and Honourable Ladies of the Church of *England*, the *Elect Ladies* of her Apostolical Communion should be zealous to begin, and carry on such a work, as this; which upon more accounts than I have mentioned, would make the Daughters of *Israel* be glad, and the Daughters of *Judah* and *Jerusalem* rejoyce.

Had Dr. Hickes read Anna van Schurman's *May the Christian Maid be a Scholar?* Or had he seen the *Prospectus* and *Essay* of Mrs. Makin which had appeared eleven years before he preached his Sermon to the Lord Mayor?

Among the clergy of the English Church the Reverend George Hickes must take rank as the earliest and one of the most important defenders of higher education for women. His Easter sermon antedated Mary Astell, and his claim was more generous and daring than hers. In 1710, when he published *Controversial Letters*, he included letters from Susanna Hopton and Lady Gratiana Carew, and he considered them valuable aids in the presentation of religious truth. It was he who called Mrs. Bovey "the Christian Hypatia," and he was the chief encourager of Elizabeth Elstob.

Besides these individual manifestations of approval Dr. Hickes contributed to the cause of the right education of girls by a translation of Fénelon's *Traité de l'éducation des filles* (1688), under the title *Instructions for the Education of a Daughter, by the Author of Telemachus. To which is Added, A Small Tract of Instructions for the Conduct of Young Ladies of the Highest Rank. With Suitable Devotions Annexed. Done into English and Revised by George Hicks.* In putting the French treatise into an English dress Dr. Hickes has not hesitated to make such changes as would bring the book closer to English needs. This book was so widely read and so influential in Eng-

land that rather full extracts may profitably be given. But it should be noted in advance that the general tone of this treatise is much more conventional, much less liberal, in its ideas of education and of opportunity for self-expression than was Dr. Hickes in his Easter sermon, and in his encouragement of individual learned women. But it must be remembered that here he is not writing for mature women with superior minds, but for young girls of high social rank to whom he wishes to recommend the most exalted ideals of character, behavior, and general culture. Modest indeed are the requirements in exact learning:

Teach her to *Read* and *Write* correctly. It is shameful, but ordinary, to see Gentlewomen, who have both Wit and Politeness, not able yet to pronounce well what they read; they either hesitate, or else chant, as it were, in reading; whereas they ought to pronounce their Words with a plain and natural Tone, such as is also firm and uniform. They are still more grossly deficient in Orthography, or in Spelling right, and in the manner of forming or connecting Letters in Writing. Accustom her then, from the first, to make her Lines strait, and to have her Character neat and legible.

It would also be requisite for her to understand a little *Grammar* of her Native Language; by which it is not meant, she should be taught by Rule, as Boys are, *Latin:* Use her only without Affectation, not to take one Tense for another; to express herself in proper Terms; to explain clearly her Thoughts, with Order, and after a short and concise manner. Thus will you put her into a Method, by which she may teach her own Children afterwards to speak well and truly, without any formal Study. It is well known, that in Old Rome, Sempronia the Mother of the *Gracchi*, contributed very much to the forming of the Eloquence of her Sons, who became afterwards so great Men.

She ought also to understand the Four first great Rules of Arithmetic; you may make good use of them, in teaching her thereby to keep your Accompts. This is indeed a troublesome Employment to a great many; but an Habit from her Childhood, joyn'd with the Easiness of keeping readily, by the Help of these Rules, all Sorts of Accompts, tho' never so intricate, will very much diminish this Dislike. Now 't is sufficiently known how much Exactness of Accompts conduces to the good Order in Families.

After these instructions, which are to hold the first Rank, I believe it will not be quite useless, to allow young Ladies according to their

Leisure, and their Capacity, the *reading* of some select prophane Authors, that have nothing Dangerous in them for the Passions. This is the Means to give them a Distaste of most Plays and Romances; Give them therefore into their Hands *Greek* and *Roman* Histories, in the best Translations; they will see in them wonderful Instances of Courage, of Faithfulness, of Generosity, and of the great Contempt of their own private Advantage, whenever the Publick was in the Balance. Let them not be ignorant of the History of *Britain*, which hath also some very great Instances of Brave (no less than of Bad) Actions, that hardly any thing in Antiquity will be found to exceed: Those Illustrious Patterns which have been set by their own Nation and by Persons too of their own Sex, will be apt more strongly to influence them.

Though *Natural Philosophy* seems not to be adapted to the Understanding of Women, or at least not to fall within the Bounds of what concerns their Duty; yet *Moral Philosophy* is, upon both Accounts, to be studied by them.[1] *Languages* are next to be considered. It is commonly believ'd in *France*, that a Lady that would be well-bred, must learn *Italian* and *Spanish;* as with us, *French* at least. I see nothing of less Benefit than this Study, unless it be where the Lady is oblig'd to it on account of Business. . . . Some, and those the farthest in the World from all Pedantry, think it would not be unreasonable for this End, to have them learn a little *Latin*. For which, there may be a great deal more Reason in those Countries, where this is look'd on as the Language of the Church; it being an inestimable Fruit and Consolation, say they, to understand the Words of the Divine Service, whereat one is oblig'd to attend so often. Yet doubtless, every where the Advantages of it are not small, if but accompanied with Humility, and season'd with Prudence.

To this restricted course of study is added most careful advice as to general reading with a particular caution against romances. If Dr. Hickes's advice had prevailed Steele's Biddy Tipkin and Mrs. Lennox's Arabella would never have existed:

But, on the contrary, Young Persons, and Women especially, without Instruction and Application, have always a roving Imagination.

[1] From *Instructions to a Young Princess* on this point we read: "I only desire you to believe, that true Wisdom consists in knowing exactly your Duty; and whatsoever carries a Woman farther than that, is generally either dangerous or unprofitable. For, to be plain, how doth it concern you, to know, whether the Sun or the Earth move, or after what manner Thunder and Tempest are form'd in the Skies, and a Hundred other Things as little necessary as these?"

For want of solid Nourishment, their Curiosity violently turns them towards Vain and Dangerous Objects. Such as have a little Capacity, are in Danger to set up for Wits; they read, for this, all the Books that may feed their Vanity; they are extremely affected with Romances, with Plays, with the Relations of Chimerical Adventures, in which profane Love bears a mighty Share; they fill their Minds with empty Notions; and, using themselves to the Magnificent Language of Heroes, or Heroins, in Romances, they spoil themselves hereby for Converse in the World: For all these fine airy Sentiments, these generous Passions, these strange Adventures, which the Author of the Romance, or Play, hath invented merely for Pleasure, bear no sort of proportion, either to the True *Motives*, which are generally the Springs of our Actions in the World, and upon which all our Affairs do turn; or to the *Mistakes*, which are commonly met with in all that is here undertaken.

A poor raw Girl, whose Head is fill'd with the moving and surprising Strains, which have charmed her in her Reading, is astonished, not to find in the World real Persons, who may answer to these Romantick Heroes. Fain would she live like those imaginary Princesses, who are in the Romances, that is, always charming, always adored, always above all kind of Want: What a Disgust must it be then, for her to descend from this Heroical State, down to the meanest Parts and Offices of Housewifery.

A second limit is set in cases where the roving imagination may carry young women to subjects too high for them:

Some carry their Curiosity yet much farther still, and set themselves even to decide Matters of Religion, as much as if they had studied in the Schools of Divinity twice Seven Years; and with a Magisterial Air, are for determining some of the most Knotty Questions that divide Men of the greatest Learning and Capacity; and for settling the Bounds of Truth betwixt the several contending Parties, as if they were capable of the Employment.

From "An Address to the Right Honourable the Lady ——, From the Translator," we get a list of books considered by Dr. Hickes as advisable reading for English girls:

It must be acknowledg'd, that there is not less difficulty in the Chusing good Books to busy one's self withal in *Solitude*, than good Friends to Entertain one in *Conversation*. Those which I would recommend to a Young Lady, next to the Holy Scriptures, are, The Whole Duty of Man; The Lady's Calling; and The Govern-

MENT OF THE TONGUE. After these let her read Dr. Cave's PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY, to give her an Idea of the Lives and Manners of the Ancient Christians; with which she may join his LIVES OF THE APOSTLES, and, A COMPANION FOR THE FESTIVALS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, by Robert Nelson, Esq. She ought not likewise to be unacquainted with A SERIOUS PROPOSAL TO THE LADIES, FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THEIR TRUEST AND GREATEST INTEREST, in Two Parts; nor with THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS PROFESS'D BY A DAUGHTER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND: These Two, being written by one of her own Sex, may probably serve to make a deeper Impression upon her, and will be both Instructive and Delightful. To these, if you please, you may add, THE LADY'S NEW YEARS GIFT; and, JUST MEASURES OF THE PIOUS INSTITUTION OF YOUTH, by Mr. Monro. But, chiefly, the Two Volumes of THE CHRISTIAN PATTERN, may very Profitably be recommended to her; the Christian Exercises and Entertainments, in the Second, she will find of very peculiar Service and Consolation to her, in all the several Stages of Life; and if she can be brought to be in love with the Character herein of *Philothea*, the Work is soon done. The *Meditations* and *Soliloquies* of St. Augustine, deserve likewise to be of the Number of her more intimate Companions; together with the DEVOTIONS IN THE ANCIENT WAY OF OFFICES, WITH PSALMS, AND HYMNS, AND PRAYERS FOR EVERY DAY IN THE WEEK, publish'd by Dr. Hickes: Nothing can be ever sweeter or finer than some of the *Meditations*, and particularly the *Hymns*. To these let her add a most excellent Book, called, THE OLD RELIGION; with the WINTER EVENING CONFERENCES; which, together with solid Instruction, will be very divertive: Both by Dr. Goodman. That when she approaches the Solemn Assemblies, she may do it with that Understanding and Devotion which she ought, let her read *Comber* or *Bennet* upon the *Liturgy*. That she may read the *Scriptures* in her Closet with a greater Relish, let her peruse Mr. *Boyle's Considerations* on their *Stile*. For the *Psalms*, wherein I must needs suppose her particularly conversant, she may have *Hatton's Psalter*, or *Patrick's Paraphrase*, which are very plain, and will be of excellent Use. The rest of the Practical Works of this last Author, will not be unworthy her Acquaintance, but especially THE PARABLE OF THE PILGRIM, the Pleasantness and Easiness of which will incite her to read forward, and will much help to inspire a lovely Idea of Religion. For the same Reason, that I recommend the last, I would likewise THE MARTYRDOM OF THEODORA, with some few Pieces of like Nature. And the TELEMACHUS of our Author will be better, sure, for her, than any Romance or Novel besides: This, though written in Prose, is perhaps the most compleat Poem that several Ages have produced, for the

Subject and Disposition of it. She may be directed likewise to the *Psyche* of Dr. *Beaumont;* to Dr. *Woodford's Poetical Paraphrases* on the Psalms and Canticles; Sir *Richard Blackmore's Paraphrase* on Job; the *Davideis* and some of the *Pindaricks* of Mr. *Cowley*. If she be Curious, her Time will not be lost in turning over the best Histories and Memoirs. For *Plays*, there is great Danger in giving her but a Taste of them, tho' there should be some few that may be read, not only Innocently, but Usefully: And great Caution will be required, not to be hurt by some that are the best Written, and not to fall by them into sundry Inconveniences and Temptations, which may not so presently, perhaps, appear; which the Principles laid down in this Treatise of *Education* do sufficiently evince. For *Sermons*, at her leisure Hours, when she is disposed to read them, there is abundant Choice. Let her not affect to read such as are too Learned, or above her Capacity; and especially, let her avoid all such as savour of a Party, and that may tend to sowre her with Disputes either Civil or Religious. For the Study of *Morality*, SENECA'S MORALS, Abstracted by *L'Estrange*, is almost the only Piece, that I should offer to her, besides the Incomparable ESSAYS of Mr. *Collier*, and his ANTONINUS. I mention but a few, among many others excellent in this kind, because I would not have her distracted by too great Variety of Reading.

The final admonition implies the danger always in the background of the most liberal eighteenth-century mind, and that is that learning, even hedged-in and expurgated learning, might make girls bold and unfeminine:

That which remains next, is to win young ladies to beware of the Reputation of being *Witty;* such a Reputation being constantly attended with very great Perils and Inconveniences to them. For if you take not Care hereof, they that are of a brisk lively Spirit, will continually be intriguing, will be forward to speak of everything, and be criticising on Matters beyond their Capacity; while they affect to shew their Wit, and study to be applauded when they are but troublesome by their Niceness. If you can but give them a Relish for the true Delicacy, they will presently be asham'd of this Affectation of Wit and Humour; and so will avoid splitting upon those dangerous Shelves, which such a Temper is ordinarily exposed to. Show them sweetly that the Virgin Delicacy, the less it is touched, is the more admired. . . . A Maid ought not to speak but for Necessity; nor then but with an Air of Diffidence and Deference: she ought not likewise to talk of things which are above the common reach of Young Women, even though she, herself, may, perhaps, be instructed in them.

It would be interesting to know whether the next and most pronounced advocate of higher education, Mary Astell (1666-1739) Mary Astell, had read Dr. Hickes's sermon. Miss Astell [1] was born in Newcastle in 1666. Her father died when she was twelve; the uncle who is supposed to have educated her died when she was thirteen; her mother died when she was eighteen. Beyond these facts nothing is known of her early life. A record of the education of Anne Killegrew, Anne Kingsmill, and Mary Astell would be a social document of great significance for the reign of Charles II. But it was a record too slight to be kept. Of the books these young ladies read, the studies they pursued, of the schools they may have attended, of the tutors they had, we get no hint. Of the early influences that led them to achievements unusual in their day and circle we know nothing. When we first meet them their formal education is complete and we can surmise its details only by doubtful inferences based on later attainments.

At about twenty Mary Astell went to London and there she lived till her death in 1731, Chelsea being the part of the city with which she was most definitely associated. There is no available record of the first seven years of her London life. But during this time she must have been doing thorough and consecutive reading in history, philosophy, theology, and politics. And she must have read analytically, critically, with vigorous independent judgment, for at twenty-seven she was well ready for the era of controversy on which she then entered. Her style was also so matured in her first published work as to indicate a disciplined mind and pen.

In 1693–94 she was in correspondence with John Norris concerning his theory that God should be the sole object of human love. So acute, so devout, so ably expressed, were Miss Astell's letters that Mr. Norris won her consent to an anonymous publication of the correspondence in 1695 under the title, *Letters concerning the love of God.* In his Preface Dr. Norris said that

[1] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell.* First full presentation of the life and works of Mary Astell.

he could not express the value he set upon Miss Astell's letters either as to their ingenuity or their piety, "the former of which might make them an entertainment for an angel, and the latter sufficient (if possible) to make a saint of the blackest devil." He said he had never met any discourses that had so enlightened his mind and enlarged his heart, had so taken possession of his spirit, and had exerted such "a general and commanding influence over his whole soul."

While carrying on this discussion with Mr. Norris another subject had been more definitely occupying Miss Astell's active mind, and in 1694 she had published her most original and important work, *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their true and greatest interest.* This appeared in July, 1694, and by 1697 the fourth edition came out. "By a Lover of her Sex" was the only indication of authorship. In 1700 she published *Some Reflections upon Marriage,* a discussion based on the unhappy experiences of her neighbor in Chelsea, the Duchess of Mazarine. The years 1704–05 show her greatest activity. In *Moderation Truly Stated* (1704) she answered Owen's *Moderation a Virtue,* and in the Preface discussed Davenant's recently published *Essays on Peace and War.* In *A Fair Way with Dissenters and their Patrons* (1704) she attempted to answer Defoe's *Shortest Way with Dissenters,* while in a Postscript she carried on her analysis of Owen's views on Moderation. In *An Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of Rebellion and Civil War in this Kingdom* she took up another phase of politics — religious controversy, showing herself a believer in Stuart doctrines of Church and State. *The Christian Religion as Profess'd by a Daughter of the Church of England* (1705) showed the insidious dangers of latitudinarianism and deism within the Church, and defended the Christian religion as reasonable and resulting in moral excellence. In 1709 appeared her last pamphlet, *Bart'lemy Fair, or an Enquiry after Wit,* an attack on Shaftesbury's *Letter Concerning Enthusiasm,* which she, however, wrongly attributed to Swift. The Preface to *Bart'lemy Fair* is a bitter invective against the Kit-Kat Club.

The pamphlets thus briefly listed are sufficient to show with what sustained energy Mary Astell entered into the discussions most vital in her day. Education, religion, politics, and social questions held her entire attention. She was never sidetracked into anything light or gay. We find no indications that she had any interest in art or general literature, that she had any of the recognized accomplishments, that she put any stress on scientific or linguistic attainments. She was temperamentally a controversialist, a propagandist. She was too serious, too much in earnest, to play with a subject. Her disapprovals were never softened by any humorous recognition of human foibles. For the graces and amenities of style she had slight regard. But she was beyond any woman and most men of her day in her command of the weapons of satire and irony. She could pierce to the heart of a sham or a sophistry, and she was merciless in her analysis of a trifling, corrupt, or irreligious life. She stands as a new type of learned woman. No other woman had ideas so rigorously thought-out or so firmly expressed. She taught with authority, not with the timidity, self-distrust, or reticence supposedly feminine in her time. She did not write for money or for fame. She wrote because she had a message.

Many of the actual causes championed by Mary Astell are now dead issues, but her ideas concerning women, their education, their increased freedom of action, even in some measure their economic independence, led her into a field of controversy the problems of which are even yet but imperfectly solved. In the cause of feminism she did pioneer work quite amazing in its challenge of contemporary opinion and in its tempered wisdom. Her fundamental assumption was that the potentialities of women must be considered undetermined until they have been given full opportunities for preparation, and tested by real tasks. "Women are from their very Infancy," she says, "debarr'd those advantages with the want of which they are afterwards reproached, and nursed up in those vices which will hereafter be upbraided to them.

So partial are Men to Expect Bricks when they afford no Straw."

Eleven years later in the Preface to *Reflections on Marriage*, in the edition of 1706, she wrote with greater bitterness:

In the first place, Boys have much Time and Pains, Care and Cost bestowed on their education, Girls have little or none. The former are early initiated in the Sciences, are made acquainted with Antient and Modern Discoveries, they Study Books and Men, have all imaginable encouragement; not only Fame, a dry reward now-a-days, But also Title, Authority, Power, and Riches themselves which purchase all things, are the reward of their improvement. The latter are restricted, frown'd upon, beat, not *for* but *from* the Muses; Laughter and Ridicule that never-failing Scare-Crow is set up to drive them from the Tree of Knowledge. But if in spite of all difficulties Nature prevails, and they can't be kept so ignorant as their masters would have them, they are stared upon as Monsters, Censur'd, Envyd and every way discouraged, or at the best they have the Fate the Proverb assigns them: *Virtue is praised and starved.*

Even more caustic is her outburst against the women who accept the theory of their inferiority and hug their chains:

She's a Fool who would attempt their Deliverance or Improvements. No, let them enjoy the great Honour and Felicity of their tame, submissive and depending Temper! Let the Men applaud, and let them glory in this wonderful Humility! Let them receive the Flatteries and Grimaces of the other Sex, live unenvied by their own, and be as much belov'd as one such Woman can afford to love another! Let them enjoy the Glory of treading in the Footsteps of their Predecessors, and of having the Prudence to avoid that audacious attempt of soaring beyond their Sphere! Let them Houswife or Play, Dress and be pretty entertaining Company! Or, which is better, relieve the Poor to ease their own Compassions, read pious Books, say their Prayers, and go to Church, because they have been taught and us'd to do so, without being able to give a better Reason for their Faith and Practice! Let them not by any means aspire to being Women of Understanding, because no Man can endure a Woman of Superior Sense, or would treat a reasonable Woman civilly, but that he thinks he stands on higher Ground, and that she is so wise as to make Exceptions, in his Favour, and to take her Measures by his Directions; they may pretend to Sense, indeed, since meer Pretences only render one the

more ridiculous! Let them, in short, be what is call'd *very* Women, for this is most acceptable to all sorts of Men; or let them aim at the Title of *good devout* Women, since Men can bear with this; but let them not judge of the Sex by their own Scantling: For the great Author of Nature and Fountain of all Perfection, never design'd that the Mean and Imperfect, but that the most Compleat and Excellent of his Creatures in every Kind, should be the Standard to the rest.[1]

In spite of these very real elements of discouragement Mary Astell proposed a remedy. The basic assumptions of her *Serious Proposal* in 1694 are nearly identical with those of Bathsua Makin's *Prospectus*, twenty-one years earlier. They agree that girls have minds worth training, that education is their natural right, their most reliable safeguard, and a permanent source of strength and happiness. But here the likeness ends. Mrs. Makin's inchoate plans contemplated little more than the ordinary school for housewifery and accomplishments, with the addition of solid learning for those who could be lured into it. The total training did not extend beyond the years a girl would ordinarily spend in a boarding-school, hence the genuine learning she could gain would be almost negligible. Mary Astell's plan was much more comprehensive. It was for women as well as for girls. To her "Religious Retirement" might go women tired of the world, young women waiting the arrangement of a suitable marriage, heiresses desiring to escape pursuit, spinsters anxious for some honorable retreat from a derisive world. All would find a serene and ordered life. But no vows were to be taken. In fact, one important purpose of the college was to provide England with virtuous and accomplished wives, through whom social regeneration might be brought about.

In thus educating wives, however, Mary Astell had no iconoclastic or alarming notions of female dominance. She is as positive as the author of *The Ladies Calling*, or of Halifax himself, in her conception of the husband as the head of the house. She says:

[1] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, p. 99.

She then who Marries, ought to lay it down for an indisputable Maxim, that her Husband must govern absolutely and intirely, and that she has nothing else to do but to Please and Obey. She must not attempt to divide his Authority, or so much as dispute it; to struggle with her Yoke will only make it gall the more, but must believe him Wise and Good in all respects the best, at least he must be so to her. She who can't do this is no way fit to be a Wife, she may set up for that peculiar Coronet the antient Fathers talk'd of, but is not qualified to receive the great Reward which attends the eminent Exercise of Humility and Self-denial, Patience and Resignation, the duties that a Wife is call'd to.[1]

Education can fortify and guide married women and can give them unending private satisfaction, but can in no way alter their status or secure them any freedom.

To the unmarried woman the college offered the only means so far devised whereby they could not only escape from the odium of a single life, but could have a chance for activity along lines chosen in accordance with their tastes and capacities.

The aims of the college and the plans as outlined were so reasonable and put forward with so much eloquence that they attracted favorable attention. Part II of the *Proposal* was dedicated to the Princess Anne, and it is to her that we must give the credit for a subscription of £10,000 for the necessary buildings.[2] And it is practically certain that Bishop Burnet, at this time tutor to the young Duke of Gloucester and so of easy access to Anne, is the one to whom we must ascribe the withdrawal of that subscription and along with it the royal sanction so essential an element in the success of the plan. Bishop Burnet saw in this proposed "Lay Monastery" a source of plots and cabals dangerous to the Church. And Anne was too devout and narrow-minded a churchwoman to run any such risks. So the plan came to no practical realization.

Though the time was probably not ripe for such a college, it is significant that in the aristocratic circle where Mary Astell

[1] *Reflections on Marriage*, p. 29. Quoted in Miss Smith's *Mary Astell*, p. 89.
[2] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, p. 22.

moved there was apparently considerable favorable discussion of the project. In 1697 Thomas Burnet wrote to the Electress Sophia of Mary Astell as "a young Ladie of extraordinary piety and knowledge as any of the age" and comments on her "two little books of proposals to the Ladies" as showing "both her zeal and judgment in thee advyces given to her sex, for the reformation of manners, living, studies, and conversations of the ladies." [1] In the same year Defoe, in his *Essay on Projects*, referred with praise to Mary Astell, though not agreeing with her plans in detail. In 1697, also, Evelyn commented favorably on Mary Astell: He said that he could not omit some acknowledgment of the satisfaction he had received from her "most sublime" writings, and he adds concerning her college, "Besides what lately she has proposed to the Virtuous of her Sex, to shew by her own Example, what great Things, and Excellencies it is Capable of, and which calls to mind the Lady of that *Protestant Monastery*, Mrs. *Farrer*, not long since at *Geding* in *Huntington-shire*." [2] George Wheler, in *A Protestant Nunnery*, refers to "*A Serious Proposal* written by an ingenious Lady" and gives it the further compliment of adopting some of its ideas.[3] George Hickes, in his *Instructions for the Education of a Daughter* (1708), gives *A Serious Proposal* and *The Christian Religion*, by Mary Astell, in the list of books which he commends to young women. Robert Nelson, in an *Address to Persons of Quality* (1715), also praised the *Proposal to Ladies* as made "by a very Ingenious Gentlewoman, which was then well approved by several ladies and others." [4]

The wits of the time are usually accredited with derisive laughter at the female college. But the chief attacks were from Swift in *The Tatler* in 1709, fifteen years after the *Proposal*, Part I, and twelve years after the second part. Swift's *Tatler* articles followed immediately on Mary Astell's *Bart'lemy Fair*, and were really not so much an attack on a college for women as an attempt to answer Mary Astell's satiric commentary on the

[1] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, p. 70.
[2] Evelyn, John: *Numismata*.
[3] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, p. 73.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

Kit-Kat Club, and on Steele and Swift in particular. It was a sort of *quid pro quo* in which Swift seized upon the weapons most available. The coarseness of the description of the college must have been very offensive to Mary Astell as a similar vulgarity of attack in *Three Hours after Marriage* must have offended Lady Winchilsea. Swift represents the professors of the college to be Madonella (Mary Astell), Epicene (Mrs. Manley), and Mrs. Elstob, a union that would probably have been as irritating to Mrs. Manley as it was to her virtuous coadjutors in academic chairs. The break-up of the college is due to a company of rakes to whom the ladies collegiate give joyous welcome.

Steele's attacks on Mary Astell are much milder. He represents her as "Mrs. Comma, the great Scholar," who defends her desired seclusion by herself announcing to would-be callers that she is "not at home." Again, she is put in as the foreman of a jury in a Court of Honour, and is described as a "professed Platonist that had spent much of her time in exhorting the sex to set a just value upon their persons, and to make the men know themselves."

That the attention attracted by Mary Astell's writings was not all contemptuous has been already indicated. Her books were, however, but one source of her influence. In her later life not only was she of sufficient repute to make her home in Chelsea a sort of minor learned salon, but she had considerable personal influence among younger women of like aspirations. Of three of her friendships with learned women we have some knowledge. The most intimate of these was with Lady Elizabeth Hastings, twenty-two years her junior. Lady Betty went to Ledstone to live in about 1705 and was thereafter only occasionally in London, so they could not have had much continuous personal association, but they apparently found themselves in immediate accord on vital subjects. Lady Betty and her sisters on the remote Yorkshire estate almost realized in a small way Mary Astell's ideal of a religious retirement. If the correspondence between them were only extant it would be

invaluable. Elizabeth Elstob is also given as one of Mary Astell's friends. Miss Elstob was in London from 1709 to 1715 and came to know Miss Astell during this period. It was to Miss Elstob that Ballard wrote for information about Miss Astell when he wished to write her biography, which might seem to argue a known friendship between the two. But against any theory of real intimacy is the fact that Miss Astell, a woman of substance and wide influence, did not exert herself in Miss Elstob's behalf when she was left penniless and driven into obscurity. The most noted of Mary Astell's literary friends was Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The culmination of that friendship in the indignant championship by Mary Astell of Lady Mary's *Turkish Letters* appears in an essay dated 1724, but the friendship was of much earlier date. It was not by wealth or position or beauty or social charm that Mary Astell gained and held her friends. In person she was "ill-favoured and forbidding," in manner she was abrupt and even rough in repelling what displeased her. She defended her own leisure and followed her own plans with defiance of all social conventions. She had the instincts of a recluse. She was deeply religious, austere to the point of asceticism, and her friendships were no matter of mutual admiration and easy compliances. She was a flaming advocate of Lady Mary against all detractors, but she stoutly combated Lady Mary's religious indifferentism. It was by sheer force of intellectual ability, moral earnestness, and profound convictions that Mary Astell gained her general repute and by sincerity and an unexpected ardor of devotion that she held her friends.

Mary Astell's *Serious Proposal* appeared in 1694 with a second edition in 1695. In 1696 there appeared another feminist pamphlet the full title of which was *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex in which are inserted the characters of A Pedant, A Squire, A Beau, A Vertuoso, A Poetaster, A City-critick. C. In a Letter to a Lady by a Lady.* A second edition in 1696, a third in 1697, a

An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex (1696)

fourth in 1791, and an undated but later edition, testify to its popularity. This pamphlet was long attributed to Mary Astell, but both internal and external evidence are against her authorship. There seem to be reasons for ascribing it to Mrs. Drake, the sister of the Mr. James Drake who wrote the commendatory poem and essay published with the *Defence of the Female Sex*.[1] Whoever the author was she certainly deserves the credit of being the most brilliant woman writer of her period. In her Preface she says:

> There have been women in all Ages, whose Writings might vie with those of the greatest Men, as the Present Age as well as past can testifie. . . . Their names are already too well known, and celebrated to receive any additional Lustre from so weak Encomiums as mine. . . . I pretend not to imitate, much less to Rival those Illustrious Ladies who have done so much Honour to their Sex, and are unanswerable Proofs of what I contend for. I only wish, that some Ladies now living among us (whose names I forbear to mention in regard to their Modesty) wou'd exert themselves, and give us more recent Instances, who are both by Nature and Education sufficiently qualified to do it, which I pretend not to.

The *Essay* opens with a statement that women must plead their own cause, since men no longer enter the lists in their behalf. The most recent woman's advocate, William Walsh, she dismisses with scant praise:

> Those Romantick days are over, and there is not so much as a *Don Quixote* of the Quill left to succor the distressed Damsels. 'T is true a Feint of something of this Nature was made three or four years since by one; but how much soever his Eugenia may be oblig'd to him, I am of Opinion the rest of her Sex are but little beholding to him. For as you rightly observ'd, *Madam*, he has taken more care to give an Edge to his Satyr, than force to his Apology; he has play'd a sham Prize, and receives more thrusts than he makes. . . . He levels his Scandals at the whole Sex, and thinks us sufficiently fortified, if out of the Story of Two Thousand Years he has been able to pick up a few Examples of Women illustrious for their Wit, Learning or Vertue. . . . I have neither Learning nor Inclination to make a Precedent, or indeed any use of

[1] See article by A. H. Upham in *Journal of English and German Philology*, vol. XII, No. 2, pp. 262–76; Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, Appendix II.

Mr. W's labour'd Common Place Book; and shall leave Pedents and School-Boys to rake and tumble the Rubbish of Antiquity, and muster all the *Heroes* and *Heroins* they can find.

The *Essay* takes up no such serious and practical topics as Mary Astell discusses. The curious question proposed is, "Whether the time an ingenious Gentleman spends in the Company of Women, may justly be said to be misemploy'd, or not." The opinion to be combated is that of men who declare the company of women to be irksome and unprofitable. The author gives the old argument that in souls there is no male and female, and brings Scripture proof that woman was expressly created as a companion for man. If the divine plan has been interfered with by the disqualification of women the cause is to be found not in their minds or natures but in their lack of education. Men should no more exult over being wiser than women than they would congratulate themselves on conquering a man whose hands were tied.

But women, even without regular education, know more than they are supposed to know. At boarding-schools, to be sure, they learn only needlework, dancing, singing, music, drawing, painting, and other accomplishments; and of languages they know only their mother tongue and French, "now very fashionable and almost as familiar amongst Women of Quality as Men." But after school days they have abundant leisure and the world of classic literature is open to them in translations. Ovid, Tibullus, Juvenal, Horace, Plutarch, Seneca, and Cicero may be read by the woman who knows only her mother tongue, and Dryden has already given "Divine Samples" of the sweetness and majesty of Virgil. The graces of France and Italy are equally at woman's command. Following this account of foreign, especially classic literature, is an energetic passage, very modern in tone, attacking the conception dominant in the Augustan age that the term "learning" applied only to a knowledge of the dead languages.

Nor can I imagine for what good Reason a Man skill'd in Latin and Greek, and vers'd in the Authors of Ancient Times shall be call'd Learned; yet another who perfectly understands *Italian, French, High Dutch*, and the rest of the *European* Languages, is acquainted with the Modern History of all those Countries . . . shall after all this be thought Unlearned for want of those two Languages. Nay, though he be never so well vers'd in the Modern Philosophy, Astronomy, Geometry, and Algebra, he shall notwithstanding never be allow'd that honourable Title. . . . Thus you shall have 'em allow a Man to be a wise Man, a good Naturalist, a good Mathematician, Politician, or Poet, but not a Scholar, a learned Man, that is no Philologer. For my part I think these Gentlemen have just inverted the use of the Term, and given that to the knowledge of words, which belongs more properly to Things. I take Nature to be the great Book of Universal Learning, which he that reads best in all, or in any of its Parts, is the greatest Scholar, the most learned Man.

Furthermore, ignorance of Latin is no such drawback when one considers the English language and its riches. Who is nobler than Mr. Shakespeare? Whose grief more awful than Mr. Otway's? What tenderer Passion than in the *Maid's Tragedy?* Whose thoughts more beautiful and gallant than Mr. Dryden's? Her "Indignation, Compassion, Grief, are all at the Beck of these dramatists." Who can rival Sir George Etheredge, Sir Charles Sedley, for "neat Raillery and Gallantry"? Who has such strong "Wit and pointed Satyr" as Mr. Wicherley? Who can offer such "sprightly, gentile, easie Wit" as Mr. Congreve? For critics, who can more justly point out beauties and defects than Mr. Dennis and Mr. Rymer? If for poetry we are inclined, what more ravishing than the fancy of Cowley and the gallantry of Waller? For elevation of soul and reverence are there not the *Fairy Queen* and *Paradise Lost?* Then as for "satyrists," there are Mr. Butler and Mr. Oldham. For morals there are sermons, pious, solid, eloquent. For essays, Lord Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, Mr. Osborn, Sir Wm. Temple, Sir George Mackenzie, Sir Roger L'Estrange.

The second portion of the *Essay* answers those who accuse women of inconstancy, dissimulation, impertinence, and vanity. These, the author maintains, are imperfections of human

nature, not especially of women; and her method of proof is to show typical masculine exemplifications of these defects. Under vanity are a "Bully," a "Scourer," a "Fop Poet," a "Beau," a "Sloven"; these being men who disqualify themselves for agreeable social intercourse by a too emphatic and egregious desire to bring themselves into notice.

Of these the most voluminous Fool is the Fop Poet who . . . has always more Wit in his Pockets than any where else, yet seldom or never any of his own there. *Esop's Daw* was a *Type* of him; for he makes himself fine with the Plunder of all Parties. He is a Smuggler of Wit, and steals French Fancies without paying the customary Duties. Verse is his *Manufacture;* For it is more the labour of his Finger than his brain. . . . He talks much of *Jack Dryden* and *Will Wycherley,* and the rest of that Set, and protests he can't help having some respect for 'em, because they have so much for him, and his Writings. . . . Once a Month he fits out a small *Poetical Smack* at the charge of his Bookseller, which he lades with *French Plunder* new vampt in English, small Ventures of *Translated Odes, Elegies* and *Epigrams* of Young Traders, and ballasts with heavy Prose, of his own. . . . He is the Oracle of those that want Wit and the Plague of those that have it. . . . Men avoid him for the same Reason they avoid the Pillory, the security of their Ears.

The "Pedant" and the "Country Squire" are both blockheads, and thus unfitted for rational society. "For my part, I think the Learned and Unlearned Blockhead pretty equal; for 't is all one to me, whether a Man talk Nonsense, or unintelligible Sense." These characters are especially effective. Not Pope himself has a more trenchant and sharply antithetic picture of the "Vertuoso." Contemporary public opinion as to the uselessness of the students of grasses, flies, bugs, shells, coins, etc., received concise and picturesque statement in the *Defence.*

What improvements of *Physick,* or any useful Arts, what noble Remedies, what serviceable Instruments have these Mushrome, and Cockel-shell Hunters oblig'd the World with? For I am ready to recant if they can shew so good a Med'cine as Stew'd *Prunes,* or so necessary an Instrument as a *Flye Flop* of their own Invention and Discovery. . . . I wou'd not have any Body mistake me so far, as to

think I wou'd in the least reflect upon any sincere, and intelligent Enquirers into Nature, of which I as heartily wish a better knowledge, as any *Vertuoso* of 'em all. You can be my Witness, Madam, that I us'd to say, I thought Mr. *Boyle* more honourable for his learned Labours, than for his Noble Birth; and that the *Royal Society*, by their great and celebrated Performances, were an Illustrious Argument of the Wisdom of the August Prince, their Founder of Happy *Memory;* and that they highly merited the *Esteem*, *Respect* and *Honour* paid 'em by the Lovers of Learning all *Europe* over. But though I have a very great Veneration for the *Society* in general, I can't but put a vast difference between the particular Members that compose it.

The character of a "Beau" is keen and minute in observation. No coquette was more admirably dissected. The later *Tatler* pictures are inferior in brightness and pointed detail. The whole account is readable, laughable. Impertinence is defined as the quality of busying one's self with the trivial, and forcing these petty affairs on the attention of the uninterested. The author responds in lively fashion to those who count this a peculiarly feminine trait:

Thus, when they hear us talking to, and advising one another about the Order, Distribution, and Contrivance of *Household Affairs*, about the *Regulation* of the *Family*, the *Government* of *Children* and *Servants*, the provident management of a Kitchin, and the decent ordering of a *Table*, the suitable *Matching* and convenient disposition of *Furniture*, and the like, they condemn us for impertinence. Yet they may be pleased to consider, that as the affairs of the World are now divided betwixt us, the *Domestick* are our share, and out of which we are rarely suffer'd to interpose our Sense. They may be pleased to consider likewise, that as light and inconsiderable as these things seem, they are capable of no Pleasures of Sense higher, or more refin'd than those of *Brutes* without our care of 'em. For were it not for that, their Houses wou'd be meer *Bedlums*, their most luxurious Treats, but a rude confusion of ill Digested, ill mixt Scents and Relishes, and the fine Furniture, they bestow so much cost on, but an expensive Heap of glittering Rubbish. Thus they are beholding to us for the comfortable enjoyment of what their labour, or good Fortune hath acquir'd or bestow'd, and think meanly of our care only, because they understand not the value of it.

The *Essay* is, in reality, hardly more than a frame for the "Characters." It defends the female sex, by the method of

denouncing tne "Adversaries of the Sex." Its result as argument is, therefore, on the whole, negative. But the positive value of the book is great in its spirited exemplification of a woman's power to form independent judgments and to write vigorous English.

Daniel Defoe (1661-1731)

In 1697, the year in which the fourth edition of Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* appeared, Defoe published his *Essay on Projects.* Among plans for joint-stock banks, repairing and widening of highways, assurance societies, sick clubs, pensions for widows, etc., comes "An Academy for Women":

I have often thought of it as one of the most barbarous customs in the world, considering us as a civilized and a Christian country, that we deny the advantages of learning to our women. We reproach the sex every day with folly and impertinence, while I am confident, had they the advantages of education equal to us, they would be guilty of less than ourselves. One would wonder indeed how it should happen that women are conversible at all, since they are only beholden to natural parts for all their knowledge. Their youth is spent to teach them to stitch and sew, or make baubles; they are taught to read, indeed, and perhaps to write their names, or so, and that is the height of a woman's education; and I would but ask those who slight the sex for their understanding, what is a man (a gentleman I mean) good for, that is taught no more? . . . The soul is placed in the body like a rough diamond, and must be polished, or the lustre of it will never appear; and 't is manifest that, as the rational soul distinguishes us from brutes, so education carries on the distinction, and makes some less brutish than others. This is too evident to need any demonstration. But why, then, should women be denied the benefit of instruction? . . . I would ask any such, what they can see in ignorance that they should think it a necessary ornament to a woman? Or how much worse is a wise woman than a fool? Or what has the woman done to forfeit the privilege of being taught? . . . Shall we upbraid women with folly, when 't is only the error of this inhuman custom that hindered them from being made wiser?

The capacities of women are supposed to be greater, and their senses quicker, than those of the men; and what they might have been capable of being bred to, is plain from instances of female wit, which this age is not without; which upbraids us with injustice, and

looks as if we denied women the advantage of education for fear they should vie with the men in their improvements. To remove this objection, and that women might have at least a needful opportunity of education in all sorts of useful learning, I propose the draught of an academy for that purpose. . . . I doubt a method proposed by an ingenious lady, in a little book called *Advice to the Ladies*, would be found impracticable. . . . When I talk, therefore, of an academy for women, I mean both the model, the teaching, and the government different from what is proposed by that ingenious lady for whose proposal I have a very great esteem, and also a great opinion of her wit; different, too, from all sorts of religious confinement, and, above all, from vows of celibacy.

Wherefore the academy I propose should differ but little from public schools, wherein such ladies as were willing to study, should have all the advantages of learning suitable to their genius. . . .

The building should be of three plain fronts, without any jettings or bearing work, that the eye might at a glance see from one coin to the other; the gardens walled in the same triangular figure, with a large moat, and but one entrance."

Having thus provided against intrigues and escapades he would have no guards, no eyes, no spies, set over the ladies, but would expect them to be tried by the principles of honor and strict virtue.

Defoe's arguments in favor of the higher education of women represent the most advanced thought of his age.

Methinks mankind, for their own sakes, since, say what we will of the women, we all think fit one time or other to be concerned with them, should take some care to breed them up to be suitable and serviceable, if they expected no such thing as delight from them. Bless us! what care do we take to breed up a good horse, and to break him well! And why not a woman? . . .

But to come closer to the business. The great distinguishing difference which is seen in the world between men and women, is in their education; and this is manifested by comparing it with the difference between one man or woman and another.

And herein is it I take upon me to make such a bold assertion, that all the world are mistaken in their practice about women; for I can not think that God Almighty ever made them so delicate, so glorious creatures, and furnished them with such charms, so agreeable and delightful to man, with souls capable of the same accomplishments with men, and all only to be stewards of our houses, cooks, and slaves.

Not that I am for exalting the female government in the least; but, in short, I would have men take women for companions, and educate them to be fit for it. . . .

I need not enlarge on the loss the defect of education is to the sex, nor argue the benefit of the contrary practice: it is a thing will be more easily granted than remedied. This chapter is but an essay at the thing; and I refer the practice to these happy days, if ever they shall be, when men shall be wise enough to mend it.

Defoe asserts that his ideas on this subject were not derived from Mary Astell, and is even slightly irritated that she was ahead of him in publication, since he had long before mentally elaborated the scheme he suggests.

"Sophia Pamphlets" (1739-40)

The feminist argument was carried on in what are known as the "Sophia Pamphlets." The first of these appeared in 1739 and was entitled *Woman not inferior to Man: or a short and modest vindication of the natural right of the fair sex to a perfect equality of power, dignity and esteem with the men. By Sophia a person of Quality.* There was an immediate answer under the title, *Man superior to Woman; containing a plain confutation of the fallacious arguments of Sophia in her late Treatise intitled Woman not Inferior to Man.* In 1740 Sophia responded with, *Woman's superior excellence over Man or a reply to the author of a late treatise entitled Man superior to Woman. In which the excessive weakness of that Gentleman's answer to Woman not inferior to Man is exposed.* The three pamphlets were published together in 1757 under the collective title *Beauty's Triumph.* These pamphlets give an interesting little passage at arms in the feminist controversy. The subjects taken up in the first pamphlet are closely modeled on *The Woman as Good as the Man.* "In what esteem the women are held by the men and how justly"; "Whether women are inferior to men in this intellectual capacity, or not"; "Whether the men are better qualified to govern than women, or not"; "Whether the women are fit for public offices, or not"; "Whether the women are

naturally capable of teaching sciences, or not"; "Whether women are naturally qualified for military offices, or not," — these are the topics discussed. With regard to the education of women Sophia says:

Men, by thinking us incapable of improving our intellects, have entirely thrown us out of the advantages of education, and thereby contributed as much as possible to make us the senseless creatures they imagine us. So that for want of education, we are rendered subject to all the follies they dislike in us. . . . And as our sex, when it applies to learning, may be said at least to keep pace with the men, so are they more to be esteemed for their learning than the latter: Since they are under a necessity of surmounting the softness they were educated in; of renouncing the pleasure and indolence to which cruel custom seem'd to condemn them to overcome the external impediments in their way of study; and to conquer the disadvantageous notions, which the vulgar of both sexes entertain of learning in women. And whether it be these difficulties add any keenness to a female understanding, or that nature has given women, a quicker more penetrating genius than to men, it is self-evident that many of our sex have far out-stript the men. Why then are we not as fit to learn and teach the sciences, at least to our own sex, as they fancy themselves to be. . . . We may easily conclude then, that if our sex, as it hitherto appears, have all the talents requisite to learn and teach these sciences, which qualify men for power and dignity, they are equally capable of applying their knowledge to practice in exercising that power and dignity. And since, as we have said, this nation has seen many glorious instances of Women, severally qualified to have all public authority center'd in them, why may they not be as qualified at least for the subordinate offices of ministers of state, vice-queens, governesses, etc.?

Sophia has, however, one reservation. Women may not enter the ministry:

Thus far I insist there is no *science* or *public office* in a state which women are not as much qualified for by Nature as the ablest of Men. With regard to divinity, our natural capacity has been restrain'd by a positive law of God: and therefore we know better than to lay claim to what we could not practice without sacrilegious intrusion.

The Gentleman, in his answer to Sophia, takes up her claims *seriatim* and disposes of them to his own satisfaction.

Neither Juvenal nor I [he says] deny that Women may acquire some superficial Learning. All we contend for is that it is ever evil be-

stowed upon them, inasmuch as it renders them useless to their own sex, and a nuisance to ours. . . . I grant Greece has shewn its Sappho, Rome her Cornelia, France has produced a Dacier; Holland has brought forth a Schurman; Italy a Doctress; and England now boasts an Eliza and a Sophia.

But the whole serio-comic tone of the Gentleman's *Essay* makes it difficult of interpretation. Sophia writes as if she were in genuine earnest in her protest and propaganda. But it seems much less certain that the Gentleman is not merely playing with the situation.[1] The identity of the writers has not been discovered. Miss McIlquham [2] believes Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to be Sophia. But this is hardly likely, since 1739 is the year Lady Mary went to Italy. A writer signing himself "Medley," in *Notes and Queries*, suggests that "Sophia" was Lady Sophia Fermor, the second wife of Lord Cararet, and thinks she may also have been the "Sophia" of *Letters of Portia to her Daughter Sophia*, though these were not published till years later.[3]

[1] Smith, Florence: *Mary Astell*, p. 180.
[2] *Westminster Review*, vol. CLXIX, p. 444, April, 1898.
[3] *Notes and Queries*, 8th Series, vol. XI, p. 348.

CHAPTER IV

MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS ON WOMEN IN SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE

In addition to definite discussions as to the learning appropriate for women, there were numerous books on general topics pertaining to women, with incidental but often most illuminating comments on the advantages or disadvantages of a liberal education. These books also aid in building up a conception of the prevailing ideas concerning women apart from technical questions of education.

The Ladies' Calling (1673, 2d ed.)

The Ladies' Calling, the second edition of which appeared in 1673, was the most important as well as the most influential of all the seventeenth-century books on the social and domestic aspects of the life of women. The book is eminently well-bred, dignified, and aristocratic in tone, and ardently religious. The authorship of *The Ladies' Calling* has long been in dispute. Tradition has persistently ascribed it to Lady Pakington who, said Lady Winchilsea,

> Of each Sex the two best Gifts enjoy'd,
> The Skill to write, the Modesty to hide.

But if she were the author she has hidden the fact so successfully as to lose the credit of her work. Modern investigation ascribes the series of books, *The Whole Duty of Man*, *The Gentleman's Calling*, and *The Ladies' Calling*, with some degree of certainty to Richard Allestree,[1] one of the learned and devout men who found in Lady Pakington intellectual as well as religious sympathy. But it seems quite probable that Lady Pakington assisted him in *The Ladies' Calling*. At

[1] *Journal of Sacred Literature* (1864), pp. 433–35. Ballard gives the arguments in favor of Lady Pakington's authorship.

any rate, whoever the author, the book may fairly be considered an expression of the ideals of the group surrounding Lady Pakington, an outgrowth of their discussions. The "Calling" described is purely religious in tone, and the republication of the book in 1673 gains an added significance when we think of it as a protest against the social customs of the Restoration court and an appeal to ladies of high rank, summoning them to a sober sense of their duties and responsibilities. In an exaltation of Meekness, Modesty, Affability, and Piety as the genuine and proper Ornaments of Women, the author states the opposing faults as he has observed them. The picture he gives of ladies in the best circles is sufficiently appalling. Under "Modesty" is a protest against "Female swearers." "An Oath sounds gratingly out of whatever mouth, but out of a woman's it hath such an uncooth harshness that there is no noise this side of Hell can be more amazingly odious." Drinking is also reprobated as "a vice detestable in all, but prodigious in women," "nothing human being so much a beast as a drunken woman." Modesty also forbids excessive talkativeness, "that indecency of loquacity" generally charged to women. It forbids loudness of discourse, "a blustering or ranting style," or even "unhandsome earnestness." All mannishness in speech, manner, or dress must be avoided. Public speaking, even on the part of gifted women, is alien alike to St. Paul and true modesty. "Incontinence of mind," whereby secrets slip so easily from the female grasp, is likewise opposed to the sobriety and self-restraint implied in modesty.

Attractive and important as modesty is, it is outranked in value as a daily necessity by Meekness, meekness of the will, of the affections, of the understanding. Women particularly need this endearing quality of ready submission to authority, for, "since God has thus determined subjection to be the women's lot, there needs no other argument of its fitness, or for their acquiescence"; and since they must always be under the control of parents or husband, they will do well to cultivate meekness, "the parent of peace."

Affability and compassion are considered natural to women. They also have a predisposition to Piety, for it is based on Fear and Love, the "two most pungent passions of the female sex," and is, besides, their greatest ornament. Devotion, since it "requires a supple gentle soil," finds feminine softness and pliability very apt and proper for it.

The second part of *The Ladies' Calling* comes from generals to particulars. It takes up women as Virgins, Wives, and Widows. Modesty and obedience being the recognized virtues of Virgins, their case is passed over as having been already adequately presented. "Superannuated Virgins" are less easy to dispose of. "An old Maid is now thought such a Curse as no Poetic fury can exceed, look'd on as the most calamitous Creature in Nature." There was no possible complete evasion of the contempt with which protracted maidenhood was regarded. If, however, " these superannuated Virgins would behave themselves with Gravity and Reservedness, addict themselves to the strictest Virtu and Piety, they would give the world some cause to believe 't was not their necessity, but their choice, that kept them unmarried; that they were preengaged to a better Amour, espoused to the Spiritual Bridegroom: and this would give them among the soberer sort, at least the reverence and esteem of Matrons. . . . But if, on the other side, they endeavor to disguise their Age by all the impostures and gayeties of a youthful dress and behavior, if they still herd themselves amongst the youngest and vainest company, and betray a young Mind in an aged Body, this must certainly expose themselves to scorn and censure."

Under the heading "Antiquated Widows" are similar admonitions to a life of "assiduous Devotion." "How preposterous is it for an Old Woman to delight in Gauds and Trifles such as were fitter to entertain her Grand-children: to read Romances with spectacles, and be at Masks and Dancings, when she is fit only to act the Antics? These are contradictions to Nature, the tearing off her Marks, and where she has writ fifty or sixty, to lessen . . . and write sixteen."

This is a long, serious, and very sincere book, and its evident purpose is to take up all important questions concerning women. But in point of fact, decorum, morality, piety, are the only subjects of discussion. Education is not mentioned except in the Preface, where it is stated that the mental inferiority of women should not be accepted as a foregone conclusion until they have had the same opportunities as men.

> Men have their parts cultivated and improved by Education, refined and subtilized by Learning and Arts, are like an inclosed piece of a Common, which by industry and husbandry becomes a different thing from the rest, tho the natural turf owned no such inequality. And truly had women the same advantage, I dare not say but that they would make as good returns of it; som of those few that have bin tried, have bin eminent in several parts of Learning. . . . And were we sure they would have balast to their sails, have humility enough to poize themselves against the vanity of Learning, I see not why they might not more frequently be entrusted with it; for if they could be secured against this weed, doubtless the soil is rich enough to bear a good crop. But not to oppose a received opinion, let it be admitted, that in respect of their intellects they are below men; yet sure in the sublimest part of humanity, they are their equals; they have souls of as divine an Original, as endless a Duration, and as capable of infinite Beatitude.

Aside from this one passage the book is thoroughly conventional in its conception of the domestic, educational, and social duties and position of women. There is no hint of revolt, no thought of enlarged advantages. Whatever is, is right, so far as the position of women is concerned. The one appeal is for high-mindedness, personal religion, close adherence to the Church, as a woman's armor of defense. Within the realm of the spirit God and her own nature have set her free for lofty flights and great attainments.

The Lady's New Year's Gift (1688)

One of the most popular and entertaining of the many books for the particular advantage of the female sex was *The Lady's New Year's Gift: or, Advice to a Daughter*, by George Savile, first Marquess of Halifax. It was printed from a circulating manuscript without

authorization in 1688. The fifteenth edition appeared in 1765. There was a new edition in 1791. It was translated into Italian and several times into French.[1] There is no word about education in the book. It concerns itself entirely with moral, social, and domestic topics. Vanity, Pride, Censure, Religion, are characteristic headings. Under "Behaviour" is a satiric description of the women who refuse to grow old.

I will add one *Advice* to conclude this head, which is that you will let every seven years make some alteration in you towards the Graver side, and not be like the *Girls* of Fifty, who resolve to be always Young, whatever Time with his Iron Teeth hath determined to the contrary. Unnatural things carry a Deformity in them never to be Disguised; the Liveliness of youth in a riper Age, looketh like a new patch upon an old Gown; so that a Gay Matron, a cheerful old Fool, may be reasonably put into the List of the Tamer kind of Monsters. There is a certain Creature call'd a Grave Hobby Horse, a kind of a she Numps, that pretendeth to be pulled to a play, and must needs go to Bartholomew Fair, to look after the young Folks, whom she only seemeth to make her care, in reality she taketh them for her excuse. Such an old Butterfly is of all Creatures the most ridiculous, and the soonest found out.

This passage is apparently reminiscent of *The Ladies' Calling* and but emphasizes the early relegation of the lady to the cap and the chimney-corner. There are other similar social dicta but the stress of the advice is on Husbands, House, Family, Children, the Husband bulking so large in the foreground as almost to obscure other interests. "How to live with a husband" is the central topic. The general laws on which particular maxims are founded are thus stated:

You must first lay it down for a Foundation in general, That there is *Inequality* in the *Sexes*, and that for the better Oeconomy of the World, the *Men*, who were to be the Lawgivers, had the larger share of *Reason* bestow'd upon them; by which means your Sex is the better prepar'd for the *Compliance* that is necessary for the better performance of those *Duties* which seem to be most properly assign'd to it. This looks a little uncourtly at the first appearance; but upon Examination it will be found that Nature is so far from being unjust to you,

[1] See *Complete Works of George Savile, First Marquess of Halifax.*

that she is partial on your side. She hath made you such large *Amends* by other Advantages, for the seeming *Injustice* of the first Distribution, that the Right of Complaining is come over to our Sex. You have it in your power not only to free yourselves, but to subdue your Masters, and without violence throw both their *Natural* and *Legal Authority* at your Feet. We are made of differing *Tempers*, that our Defects may the better be Mutually Supplied: Your *Sex* wanteth our *Reason* for your *Conduct*, and our *Strength* for your *Protection; Ours* wanteth your *Gentleness* to soften, and to entertain us. The first part of our Life is a good deal subjected to you in the Nursery, where you Reign without Competition, and by that means have the advantage of giving the first *Impressions*. Afterwards you have stronger Influences, which, well manag'd, have more force in your behalf, than all our *Privileges* and *Jurisdictions* can pretend to have against you. You have more strength in your *Looks*, than we in our *Laws*, and more power by your *Tears*, than we have by our *Arguments*.

The difficulties a wife may meet are fully recognized and the best ways of surmounting them are suggested. Is her husband unfaithful? The wife's proper task is Discretion, Silence, affected Ignorance. Does he drink to excess? Let her reflect that the fault is too common to be fatal to happiness. Is he ill-humored? The wife has but to mark "how the Wheels of such a Man's Head are used to move" and she can manage him at her will. Is he sullen? Watch for "the first Appearances of Cloudy Weather and be wary till the Fit shall pass." Possibly he may be a "Close-handed Wretch." This calls forth all a Wife's powers. She must use kindness, play on his ambition and vanity, using now and then even "a Dose of Wine to open up a narrow Mind." A weak and incompetent husband may become, in the hands of "a dexterous woman," even an asset of some value. She must, of course, pay deference to him in public, but she can easily see to it that he is really under her control. "Such a Fool is a dangerous Beast, if others have the keeping of him; and you must be very undexterous if when your Husband shall resolve to be an *Ass*, you do not take care he may be *your Ass*." Marriage is but a prolonged fencing-bout of wits. The woman works under unavoidable handicaps, but if she is sufficiently adroit, if she is mistress of artifice, if

she knows the tricks of the game, she may emerge from the conflict substantially victorious.

The book was written in all seriousness and with tender love for the daughter Elizabeth for whose guidance it was intended. She is said to have prized it highly and to have kept it always on her table. Elizabeth was married early to the third Earl of Chesterfield who evidently had a humorous appreciation of the book, for he wrote on the fly-leaf "Labour in vain."

A Dialogue concerning Women (1691)

In 1691 there appeared *A Dialogue concerning Women, Being a Defence of the Sex. Written to Eugenia by W. Walsh.* The Preface by John Dryden says of women: "For my own part, who have always been their Servant, and have never drawn my Pen against them, I had rather see some of them prais'd extraordinarily, than any of them suffer by detraction: And that in this Age, and at this time particularly, wherein I find more Heroines than Heroes."

The dialogue is between Misogynes and Philogynes: Misogynes brings up Solomon, Euripides, Simonides, Lucian, St. Chrysostom, and Juvenal, the Epigrammatists, Comick Poets, and Satyrists, as a dreadful array of the ancients against women, showing at least that these ancients "had a very commendable faculty of calling Names." Misogynes especially dislikes "the Learned Woman, who runs mad for the love of hard words, who talks a mixt Jargon, or *Lingua Franca*, and has spent a great deal of time to make her capable of talking Nonsense in four or five different languages." [1]

> Do you not think Learning and Politics become a Woman as ill as riding astride? [he asks]. Do you not, in answer to these, fetch me a *Sappho* out of Greece; a *Cornelia*, the Mother of the *Gracchi*, out of Rome; an *Anna Maria Schurman* out of Holland; and think that in shewing me three Learned Women in three thousand years, you have gain'd your point?

[1] Walsh, William: *A Dialogue concerning Women*, p. 31.

Philogynes answers that he shall continue in his opinion that learning is suitable for women

'till you have answer'd *Anna Maria Shurman's* Arguments in their behalf, and 'till you have taken away her self, who is one of the best Arguments.[1] 'T is possible everybody does not know, that she was very well skill'd in the *Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabick, Turkish, Greek, Latin, French, English, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch, and Flemish* Languages; that she had a very good faculty at Poetry and Painting, that she was a perfect Mistress of all the Philosophies, that the greatest Divines of her time were proud of her judgment in their own profession, and that when we had this character of her she was not above Thirty years of Age.[2]

Or shall I refer you to Mademoiselle *Gournay* among the *French*, or *Lucretia Marinella* among the *Italians*, who have both writ in defence of their Sex, and who are both Arguments themselves of the Excellency of it? [3]

Consider what Time and Charge is spent to make Men fit for somewhat; Eight or Nine Years at School; Six or Seven Years at the University; Four or Five Years in Travel; and after all this, are they not almost all Fops, Clowns, Dunces, or Pedants? I know not what you think of the Women; but if they are Fools they are Fools with less pains, and less expence than we are.[4]

Gildon's Letters (1694)

Charles L. Gildon published in 1694 a volume of miscellaneous letters and essays. Two of these letters were entitled "Chloe to Urania, against Womens being Learn'd," and "An Answer to the foregoing Letter in Defence of Womens being Learn'd." Chloe but transmits the arguments of her lover Lysander. "Learning will add fresh Pride to the Sex," he asserts, and will kindle in them an ambition of absolute Mastery. His second objection is the fundamental one. "Women were by their Creator design'd for OBEDIENCE not RULE; to be instructed by their Husbands, not to instruct them; and to Study nothing but their Household Affairs." If learning were added to the personal charms of women, not deity itself, Lysander thinks, could maintain the divinely ordained overlordship of man. A final argument is

[1] Walsh, William: *A Dialogue concerning Women*, p. 86.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 92. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 93. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

that learning will tend to make women unfaithful to their husbands, will give them "wandering desires." Lysander's antidote for the new ideas that seem to be perverting women's minds is Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter*, the authority of which was so well established that Chloe dares utter no protest against it. Urania, however, easily demolishes Lysander's objections, asserting that learning makes women humble, that no wise woman would ever think so wildly as to "attempt the inverting so prevalent, and inveterate a Custom of the Sovereignty of the Men." The *Advice to a Daughter* is a book Urania has little esteem for. Especially is she indignant at Halifax's advice to women to remain in the religious faith in which they have been brought up, since, even if such faith be error, says Halifax, women are not expected to do the voluminous reading necessary to find out the truth. Women, Urania maintains, should not govern their actions merely by what a corrupt age "expects." They have souls to save and must learn the truth and must have the learning that will guide them to the truth.

Both Lysander and Urania make the curious assumption that learning would render women more attractive. Lysander thinks it would add unduly to their power. Urania explains the tendency of the learned woman to conjugal infidelity by the statement that her uncommon learning results in an uncommon number of admirers. Let more ladies have learning and the charm of novelty would vanish.

Urania is so easily superior to Chloe and her lover that we must recognize in Gildon one of the champions of female learning.

The Ladies' Dictionary (1694)

One of the most curious books of the late seventeenth century is *The Ladies' Dictionary; Being a General Entertainment for the Fair-Sex: A Work Never attempted in English.* It was printed for "John Dunton at the Raven in the Poultry, 1694," and is signed by "N. H." who lays claim to the authorship in the following passage which

may be quoted at length, since from it we also get a characterization of the book, its proposed scope and aim:

It is now near a Twelve-month since I first entered upon this Project, at the desire of a worthy Friend, unto whom I owe more than I can do for him: And when I considered the great need of such a Book, as might be a Compleat Directory *to the Female Sex in all* Relations, Companies, Conditions and States *of Life; even from* Childhood *down to* Old-age, *and from the* Lady *at the Court, to the* Cook-maid *in the Country: I was at length prevailed upon to do it, and the rather because I know not of any Book that hath done the like; indeed many learned Writters there be, who have wrote excellent well of some* Particular Subjects *herein Treated of, but as there is not one of them hath written upon all of them, so there are some things Treated of in this* Dictionary *that I have not met with in any Language. 'T is true,* my own experience in love affairs, *might* have furnisht *out Materials for such a Work; yet I do not pretend thereby to lessen my Obligations, to those* Ladies, *who by their Generous imparting to me their* Manuscripts, *have furnisht me with* several hundred *Experiments and Secrets in* domestic affairs, beautifying, preserving, candying, physick, chirurgery, etc. *Proper for my Work, and such as were not taken out of Printed Books, or on the Credit of others, but such as are Re-commended to me from their own Practice, all which shall be inserted in a* Second Part, *if this* First *meets with Encouragement, that so both together may contain all* Accomplishments *needful for Ladies, and be thereby rendered perfect. . . . So that you'll find here at one view, the whole Series and Order of all the most Heroick and Illustrious Women of all times, from the first dawning of the World to this present Age, of all Regions and Climate,* from *the Spicy East, to the Golden West, of* all *faiths, whether* Jews, Ethnicks, *or* Christians, (*and particularly an Account of those* Women Martyrs *that suffer'd in Queen Mary's days: And in the West in 85: And of all* Eminent *Ladies, that have dy'd in* England *for these last fifty years*) *of all Arts and Sciences, both the graver, and more polite; of all Estates,* Virgins, wives and Widows; *of all Complexions and Humours, the Fair, the Foul, the Grave, the Witty, the Reserv'd, the Familiar, the Chast, the Wanton. Whatever Poets have fancied, or credible Histories have Recorded, of the first you have the Misteries and Allegories clearly interpreted and explained; of the latter the Genuine Relations Impartially delivered.*

The general arrangement of the book is alphabetical, but Mr. "N. H." is too temperamental to yield entirely to an arbitrary alphabet, and so, if words are spiritually akin, he does not hesitate to group them in defiance of their initial letters,

as when he puts "Pimp" under "Bawd," being unwilling to separate the household of Satan. There is, also, to add to the confusion, unnatural division of subjects. Under "D," "Diversions for Ladies" begins, but it is continued under "R" as "Recreations for Ladies." More than one third of the 522 pages of the book is given to such topics as "Beauty," "How to preserve Beauty," "Gracefulness," "Behaviour," "Manners," "Love," "Melancholy Lovers," "Occasions of falling in Love," "Passionate Lovers," "Opinions of the Learned on Love," "Progress of Love," "Kissing," "Wooing," "Courtship," and "Wedding."

Mr. "N. H." says he has consulted the most valuable books written for and against the "Fair-Sex" and has made free use of "Dr. Blancards, Mr. Blounts, and other Dictionaries." That he had read *The Ladies Calling* and *Advice to a Daughter* is apparent from his treatment of such topics as, "Husband Indifferent, or, how to make your Life easie with him," and "Virgins, their state and Behaviour, *particularly those in years*," where the outline of the thought and, in frequent instances, the exact phrasing of these recognized authorities are preserved.

"Religion, a lady's chief ornament," is disposed of in two pages. Learning takes about four pages. The promise of the author to give a catalogue of heroic and illustrious women is fulfilled by hundreds of names from myth and legend, from Roman, Greek, and Hebrew history, and from Italy and Holland. When he begins his search for the eminent ladies in England during the last half-century he summons quite a list, including the Countess of Pembroke, Lady Mary Wroth, Ann Askew, the daughters of Sir Anthony Cook, Lady Elizabeth Carew, Elizabetha Joanna Westonia, Lady Jane Grey, the Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. Katherine Philips, Anne Broadstreet, and "Astera Behen," but a page and a half is all he can find to say of all of them together. Mrs. Behn he describes as "a Dramatic Poetress, whose well-known Plays have been very taking; she was a retained Poetress to one of the Theatresses,

and writ, besides, many curious Poems." The Duchess of Newcastle is "a very Charitable and obliging Lady to the World" in that she "copiously imparted to publick View, her Elaborate Works . . . not forgetting to make her own and her Lord's Fame live, when Monuments shall crumble into Dust."

Taken as a whole, the book is a defense and eulogy of ladies and in the very brief portion of it dedicated to learned women it champions their ability and protests against undue limitations of their activities.

The Ladies' Diary (1703-1726)

Among the early efforts to meet the tastes of women and at the same time coax them along the paths of a more definite mentality, we must rank *The Ladies' Diary: or, The Woman's Almanack, Containing many Delightful and Entertaining Particulars, peculiarly adapted for the Use and Diversion of the Fair-Sex.* One series of these little books ranges continuously from 1703 to 1726. The *Diaries* were brought out anonymously, but Mr. Thoresby records in 1720 that he was visited by "Mr. Beighton of Coventry, an ingenious gentleman, author of the Ladies' Diary," so the authorship seems to have been known though not printed.[1] The announced purpose of the *Diaries* is "to promote some Parts of Mathematical Learning amongst the Fair Sex." To this end Enigmas, Paradoxes, and Arithmetical Questions, are proposed one year, and prizes given for the answers the next year. The Paradoxes included forty-five taken from a curious textbook entitled *Gorden's Geography.* The Enigmas were usually stated and answered in verse, and sometimes they were in French or Latin. The arithmetical questions often involved in answer a page or two of algebraic formulæ or even the processes of geom-

[1] "Mr. Graves said that Mr. Beaton's Map of Warwickshire will now come out in a little time. He commends it mightily as a most accurate Thing. This Beaton writes *The Lady's Diary,* an *Almanack,* that comes out every Year. This Beaton hath a Mathematical Head. It seems he condemns all the Mapps that ever were done of all or any Parts of England, as full of Faults. I guess him from hence to be a conceited vain Man." (Hearne's *Collections,* vol. IX, p. 106.)

etry or trigonometry. As a rule the ladies were especially interested in the Enigmas, leaving the mathematical portions to the men of letters, clergymen, and schoolmasters who solaced their winter evenings with the stimuli offered by the *Woman's Almanack*. Yet the editor asserts that even in mathematics the ladies often proved themselves very skillful. In the introduction in 1718 he says:

> And, that the rest of the Fair Sex may be encourag'd to attempt Mathematics and Philosophical Knowledge, they here see that their Sex have as clear Judgements, a sprightly quick Wit, a penetrating Genius, and as discerning and sagacious Faculties as ours, and to my Knowledge do, and can, carry them thro' the most difficult Problems. I have seen them solve, and am fully convinc'd, their Works in the Ladies *Diary* are their own Solutions and Compositions. This we may glory in as the *Amazons* of our Nation; and Foreigners would be amaz'd when I shew them no less than 4 or 5 Hundred several Letters from so many several Women, with Solutions *Geometrical, Arithemetical, Algebraical, Astronomical* and *Philosophical.*

The solemnity with which contributors devoted themselves to the *Diaries*, the stately compliments interchanged over successful work, provoke a smile, but yet it must be confessed that no other agency between 1703 and 1726 offered to women so genuine an intellectual opportunity. To some women it was literally a perennial joy. Who were the *Astræa* and the *Adrastea* whose names are so often in the prize list? Who, in particular, was *Anna Philomathes*, who could write up whole numbers, questions and answers, and who kept at the business steadily for eleven years? From what homes did the "4 or 5 Hundred several Letters" of the editor's note come? That the *Tatlers*, the *Spectators*, and the *Guardians* should have their thousands of readers is easily explicable. But do not the now obscure *Diaries* indicate a more unusual mental energy, a more genuine delight in personal mental activity? In many a home, geographies, arithmetics, histories, classical dictionaries, would surround the "Fair-Sex" as they devoted themselves with leisurely assiduity to the demands of the *Diary* for the ensuing

year. And a prize or an honorable mention marked a gratifying mental achievement.

In *The Guardian*, No. 155, we have an account of how melancholy a thing it is to see a coxcomb at the head of a family. The paper proceeds: The Guardian (1713)

This is one reason why I would the more recommend the improvements of the mind to my female readers, that a family may have a double chance for it; and if it meets with weakness in one of the heads, may have it made up in the other. It is indeed an unhappy circumstance in a family, where the wife has more knowledge than the husband; but it is better it should be so, than that there should be no knowledge in the whole house. It is highly expedient that at least one of the persons, who sits at the helm of affairs, should give an example of good sense to those who are under them.

I have often wondered that learning is not thought a proper ingredient in the education of a woman of quality or fortune. Since they have the same improveable minds as the male part of the species, why should they not be cultivated by the same method? Why should reason be left to itself in one of the sexes, and be disciplined with so much care in the other?

There are some reasons why learning seems more adapted to the female world, than to the male. As in the first place, because they have more spare time upon their hands, and lead a more sedentary life. Their employments are of a domestic nature, and not like those of the other sex, which are often inconsistent with study and contemplation. The excellent lady, the lady Lizard, in the space of one summer furnished a gallery with chairs and couches of her own and her daughters' working; and at the same time heard all doctor Tillotson's sermons twice over. It is always the custom for one of the young ladies to read, while the others are at work; so that the learning of the family is not at all prejudicial to its manufactures. I was mightily pleased the other day to find them all busy in preserving several fruits of the season, with the Sparkler in the midst of them, reading over the Plurality of Worlds. It was very entertaining to me to see them dividing their speculations between jellies and stars, and making a sudden transition from the sun to an apricot, or from the Corpernican system to the figure of a cheesecake.

There is another reason why those especially who are women of quality, should apply themselves to letters, namely, because their husbands are generally strangers to them.

It is a great pity there should be no knowledge in a family. For my

own part, I am concerned, when I go into a great house, when perhaps there is not a single person that can spell, unless it be by chance the butler, or one of the footmen. What a figure is their young heir likely to make, who is a dunce both by father's and mother's side! [1]

The Ladies' Library (1714)

Addison and Steele had in mind some publication such as *The Ladies' Library* at least three years before it appeared. On April 12, 1711 (No. 37), Addison described in *The Spectator* the library of a lady called Leonora.[2] She had assembled her books partly in accordance with her own taste, partly on the principle that there were some books no library could do without. The list is an interesting one:

Ogleby's Virgil.
Dryden's Juvenal.
Casandra.
Astræa.
Sir *Isaac Newton's* Works.
The *Grand Cyrus:* with a Pin stuck in one of the middle Leaves.
Pembroke's Arcadia.
Lock of Human Understanding: with a Paper of Patches in it.
A Spelling book.
A Dictionary for the Explanation of hard Words.
Sherlock upon Death.
The fifteen Comforts of Matrimony.
Sir *William Temple*'s Essays.
Father *Malebranche*'s Search after Truth, translated into English.
A Book of Novelles.
The Academy of Compliments.
Culpepper's Midwifery.
The Ladies' Calling.
Tales in Verse by Mr. *Durfey:* Bound in Red Leather, gilt on the Back, and doubled down in several Places.
All the Classick Authors in Wood.
A Set of *Elzivers* by the same Hand.
Clelia: Which opened of itself in the Place that described two Lovers in a Bower.

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[1] *The Guardian*, Sept. 18 and 19, 1713.

[2] "*Leonora* has been identified as Mrs. Perry, sister of Miss Shepheard, the 'Parthenia' of No. 140 and 'Leonora' of No. 113. Both were kinswomen of Sir Fleetwood Shepheard." (*The Spectator*, vol. II, p. 326.)

Baker's Chronicle.
Advice to a Daughter.
The New *Atalantis*, with a Key to it.
Mr. Steele's *Christian Heroe.*
A Prayer Book: With a Battle of *Hungary* Water by the side of it.
Dr. *Sacheverell*'s Speech.
Fielding's Tryal.
Seneca's Morals.
Taylor's Holy Living and Dying.
Le Ferte's Instructions for Country Dances.

After some comment on this list as not in all respects desirable, Addison stated that it was his purpose soon to suggest a catalogue of books that would be proper for the improvement of the sex. In May (No. 79) of the same year a lady named "B. D." reminded *The Spectator* of this promise, and urged that in his catalogue of a Female Library he would pay particular attention to devotional works. In June (No. 92) *The Spectator* gives an account of the letters received by the editor in answer to his call for help in making up his "Catalogue of a Lady's Library." Book-sellers recommend the authors they have printed; husbands give the preference to Wingate's *Arithmetic*, the Countess of Kent's *Receipts*, *The Government of the Tongue.* Ladies send in all sorts of advice. "Coquetilla begs me not to think of nailing Women upon their Knees with Manuals of Devotion, nor of scorching their Faces with Books of Housewifry." French romances and plays rank among the most popular sorts of reading. *The Spectator* renews his promise to search out in authors ancient and modern the passages most suitable for women, a work of this nature being the more necessary since most books are calculated for male readers.

In August (No. 140) "Parthenia" writes concerning her disappointment on reading the description of Leonora's Library which she finds no true guide at all, and she urges *The Spectator* to more earnest efforts in behalf of the sex:

> The great desire I have to Embellish my Mind with some of those Graces which you say are so becoming, and which you assert Reading helps us to, has made me uneasie 'till I am put in a capacity of attain-

ing them: This, Sir, I shall never think my self in, 'till you shall be pleased to recommend some Author or Authors to my Perusal. . . . I write to you not only my own Sentiments, but also those of several other of my Acquaintance, who are as little pleased with the ordinary manner of spending one's Time as myself: And if a fervent Desire after Knowledge, and a great Sense of our present Ignorance, may be thought a good presage and earnest of Improvement you may look upon your Time you shall bestow in answering this Request not thrown away to no purpose.

In spite of all this preliminary discussion the scheme was not immediately carried out. In November, 1712 (No. 528), "Rachel Welladay" wrote reproachfully: "You never have given us the Catalogue of a Lady's Library as you promised." And it was not till 1714 that *The Ladies' Library* was published by Steele. Though in three volumes and quite expensive, it became at once so popular that there was an eighth edition by 1772.[1] The book was said to be "Written by a Lady," but it is in reality a compilation from seventeenth-century authors. In the *Athenæum* (July 5, 1884) is an article by Mr. Aitkin in which the chief passages are traced to Taylor's *Holy Living* (168 pages), Fleetwood's *Relative Duties of Parents and Children*, *The Whole Duty of Man*, *The Government of the Tongue*, *The Ladies' Calling* (208 pages), Locke's *Treatise on Education*, Lucas's *Practical Christianity and Enquiry after Happiness*, Scott's *Christian Life*, Tillotson's *Sermons*, Mary Astell's *Serious Proposal* (86 pages), Halifax's *Advice to a Daughter* (47 pages), Hickes's *Education of a Daughter*. Angry charges were brought against Steele for his use of such copious extracts from Jeremy Taylor, as "an infringement on the rights of the poor orphans who have very little else to subsist on,"[2] and Mary Astell commented satirically on the consistency of the author who had shown his teeth against her *Serious Proposal* and then had transcribed "above a hundred pages of it" into his *Ladies' Library*. But no individual cavils interfered with the general approval. The book was received as an extremely judicious

[1] Aitkin, George: *The Life of Richard Steele*, vol. II, p. 397.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 39.

compilation of the best passages from authoritative sources. *The Ladies' Calling*, *Advice to a Daughter*, *A Serious Proposal*, and *The Education of a Daughter*, however unacceptable to modern thought many of their fundamental assumptions and practical rules may be, represented the highest and most dignified contemporary views as to the rights and responsibilities of women. Brought together thus in one survey these ideas would make a cumulative impression. There was nothing in the quotations to antagonize or terrify the most conservative religious readers, yet the total effect of the book would be a recognition of woman's ability to think on important and difficult questions, and the outcome would be to give her insensibly a more honorable place in home, social, and church life.

The Gentleman Instructed (8th ed., 1728)

In the *Supplement to The Gentleman Instructed* there is an animated presentation of the faults of women. Eusebius, the sage who is to instruct Neander in the duties of a gentleman, becomes so caustic in his attacks on women that Emilia presents the matter to a "Juncto" of ladies assembled to discuss the fashions. Emilia and Lucia are appointed to wait on Eusebius and explain to him that a "Select Committee of Ladies" require satisfaction at his hands. Neander proceeds in lively fashion to lay open the faults of ladies, their idleness, frivolity, vanity, and ignorance. During an arraignment so detailed and knowing it is small wonder that the envoys "sate upon the Tenters," and received the witty summary of their sins with floods of tears, or with torrents of angry words. On the entrance of Neander the colloquy takes a milder tone and Eusebius shows that he has "Balms to heal, as well as Causticks to blister." By a panegyric of noble and virtuous women he "dashes the *aigre* with the *doux*," and shows that he can speak "like a Gentleman as well as an Orator." He further modifies his harsh attitude by attributing feminine faults to defects in education. In answer to Neander's question as to the "Cause of our Ladies' Misfortune," Eusebius responds:

It's indeed a Misfortune, but almost Universal; it's spread over the whole World, and affects the whole Species. *Emilia* has touched the Cause, ill Education: This is the fatal Source of their Misery, the true Origin of all their Failings. Young Ladies are brought up as if God created 'em merely for Seraglio, and that their only Business was to charm a brutish *Sultan:* One would think they had no Souls, there is such a Care taken of their Bodies; that God had enacted a Salique Law as well as the *French,* and excluded the Sex from the Inheritance of Heaven.[1]

Later Eusebius has so far conquered the opposition of the two ladies as to venture upon specific good advice:

Pretend not in Company to Wit; you will certainly betray your Judgment. Women seldom appear more foolish, than when they aspire to the Glory of being thought wise. Good God! How was I plague'd t'other Day with the Impertinence of Madam H. She commented upon *Aristotle,* and Lectur'd us upon the *Summe* of *Thomas Aquinas.* She scorn'd the Female Topick of Modes and Dresses, and was for dancing on the high Ropes of *Physicks* and *Divinity.* We were first regaled with *Materia Prima;* then came up a Dish of *Occult Qualities;* and at last a whole Plate of Theological Terms were flung among the Company. It was as impossible to stop her in this learned Career, as a Ship under full Sail, and you might have sooner silenc'd a Hurricane, than have fetter'd her Ladyship's Tongue. The Sex admir'd her Wisdom, and the Men smil'd at her Folly. She is [*sic*] made a Provision of School Jargon, and laid it out with much Prodigality, and more Assurance. But all her Knowledge stuck on the Superficies of Words, she enter'd not into the Sense. So that the Fame of her Parts shrunk under Experience, and this Phœnix of women prov'd only a well-taught Parrot.[2]

To a eulogy of needlework he adds:

You may season Works with Reading, for though Women should not pretend to commence Doctors, yet I would not have 'em forswear Knowledge, nor make a Vow of Stupidity. Indeed it's not necessary to Rival the Knowledge of the Sybils, nor the Science of the Muses, she should not wade too deep into Controversy, nor soar so high as

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[1] *The Gentleman Instructed in the Conduct of a Virtuous and Happy Life. In Three Parts. Written for the Instruction of a Young Nobleman. To which is added, A Word to the Ladies, by way of Supplement to the First Part.* (William Darrell.) Eighth edition. London, 1723, p. 127.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 155.

Divinity. These Studies lie out of a Lady's Way: They fly up to the Head, and not only intoxicate weak Brains, but turn them; They engender Pride, and blow us up with Self-conceitedness, and when all these meet, we shall be apt to measure Faith by our private Judgment, and set up our ill-shap'd Notions against the receiv'd Tenets of our Religion.[1]

Eusebius joins with nearly all contemporary moralists in a condemnation of romances:

Let not Romances come within reach of a young Lady: They are the Poison of Youth and murther Souls, as sure as Arsenick or Ratsbane kills Bodies. . . . Alas, when a young Creature reads over flourish'd Descriptions of conquering Beauties, and captive Knights; what a fine Landskip will they draw in her Head? How powerfully will they work upon her tender Heart? What a Tumult will they raise in her Breast? . . . How often will they envy a Philoclea for having a *Pyrocles* at her Feet, and how seriously will she wish herself in the Place of Pamelia. Nay, it's odd, when the Fancy is warm'd, and the Imagination charm'd with the advantageous Characters of those Platonick Knights, she may fall in Love with the bare Product of *Sidney's* Brain, and become a real Slave to Fable and Fiction.[2]

So convincing was Eusebius that Emilia said on leaving:

To complete the Favour, be pleas'd to oblige me with your Instruction in Writing. Memory is Treacherous, and we often forget those Things that should always be remembered: Besides the Benefit is too important to be confined to a private Person. My Disease is Epidemical, and you will find few Ladies in Court untainted: Pray let the Remedy be publick. I will send it to the Press with your Leave, and present it to our Sex with a Dedication.

Then the ladies took leave of Eusebius and drove home. "They were as calm as a spring Morning, and of Enemies became *Eusebius's* Admirers." [3]

In the *Supplemant to The Gentleman Instructed* there is little that is constructive so far as education is concerned. The faults of women are wittily and picturesquely phrased, but no substi-

[1] *The Gentleman Instructed in the Conduct of a Virtuous and Happy Life. In Three Parts. Written for the Instruction of a Young Nobleman. To which is added, A Word to the Ladies, by way of Supplement to the First Part.* (William Darrell.) Eighth edition. London, 1723, p. 151.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 165. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 173.

tute scheme of life is offered. Wherever learning is specifically spoken of it is with derision.

Advice to a Lady (1731)

Lord Lyttleton wrote in 1731, when he was but twenty-two, a poem entitled "Advice to a Lady" in which he reiterated the commonplaces of the day. He counsels an "elegance of mind as well as dress," but strictly limits the exercise of such mentality as the lady may possess:

> Nor make to dangerous wit a vain pretence,
> But wisely rest content with modest sense;
> For wit, like wine, intoxicates the brain,
> Too strong for feeble woman to sustain:
> Of those who claim it more than half have none;
> And half of those who have it are undone.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Seek to be good but aim not to be great:
> A woman's noblest station is retreat:
> Her fairest virtues fly from public sight,
> Domestic worth, that shuns too strong a light.

The attitude of the prudent wife towards her husband is also indicated:

> From kind concern about his weal or woe,
> Let each domestic duty seem to flow,
> The *household sceptre* if he bids you bear,
> Make it your pride his *servant* to appear;
> Endearing thus the common acts of life,
> The *mistress* still shall charm him in the wife.

Dr. Johnson thought this poem showed a mind attentive to life, that it was vigorously and very elegantly expressed, and that it was marked by much truth and much prudence. But Lady Mary Wortley Montagu summarized Lord Lyttleton's platitude in a contemptuous couplet:

> Be plain in dress, and sober in your diet;
> In short, my deary, kiss me! and be quiet.

In 1744 Edward Moore published his *Fables for Ladies*.[1] In thirteen rather smoothly versified little tales he enforces the

[1] Chalmers: *English Poets*, vol. XIV.

ordinary maxims included in the accepted social creed for women. Only the last one goes out of the realm of decorum and domesticity. In "The Owl and the Nightingale" the Nightingale represents the woman who "minds the duties of her nest" and sings the song taught her by nature, and so gains applause from man and bird. The opposite type is represented by the Owl who, puffed up with self-conceit, spends her time in pedantry ahd sloth. The owl-like lady vaunts her own wits, twits her husband with his inferiority, and lets her children go ragged and dirty.

> With books her litter'd floor is spread,
> Of nameless authors, never read;
> Foul linen, petticoats, and lace
> Fill up the intermediate space.
> Abroad, at visitings, her tongue
> Is never still, and always wrong;
> All meanings she defines away,
> And stands, with truth and sense, at bay.

Samuel Richardson was the first to make feminism an issue in fiction. Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe have the characteristics counted ideal by Richardson, and both of these young ladies have not only exceptional facility with the pen, but they have an education superior to that of most girls of their day, and they have educational ideas far ahead of their time. Though Clarissa was very young when she died, she is represented as having accomplished much. In fine needlework she excelled cloistered nuns, pieces of her work being sent even to Italy to show the skill of English maidens. She had a pretty hand at drawing, and, even when her execution was faulty, she was nevertheless "absolute mistress in the *should-be* of art." She knew French and Italian well, and had read the chief poetry in those tongues as well as in English. She had also begun Latin. She read aloud fluently and correctly, with grace and dramatic effect. Her maxim was, "All that a woman can learn above the useful knowledge proper to her sex, *let her learn*." But she had no patience with a "learned

Samuel Richardson

slattern," and deprecated any education that could turn a woman away from domestic economy. Pamela was but sixteen when she married and her education had been in the main that gained through four years with Lady B. But after her marriage she settles into a routine of life, one element of which is three hours a day for study. Italian, French, geography, and arithmetic receive particular attention. The chief pleasures in her home are intellectual ones. Her first theatrical season in London presents her in the rôle of dramatic critic. Ambrose Philips's *The Distressed Mother* and Steele's *Tender Husband* had awakened tears and laughter from a generation of play-goers, before Pamela, self-appointed censor of the stage, revealed their immoralities and improbabilities. It is also Pamela who is chosen to lay bare the absurdities of the Italian opera. At her husband's wish she writes an extended essay in which she dissects Locke's *Treatise on Education* with explanatory and critical comments. Furthermore, quite apart from these technicalities of education, Richardson has given to Pamela, Clarissa, and Miss Howe an independent personality. They are not mere puppets of relatives or of circumstances. They strive valiantly to direct the course of their lives according to the dictates of their own reason and conscience. Parents and husbands are not the arbiters of their destiny. They hold to their own views in spite of adverse public opinion and private authority. Nor do they cling to their theories with a mere meek and silent obstinacy. They argue down all opponents. The whys and the wherefores are at their tongues' end. Conscience, mind, and will are in their own keeping.

These striking characteristics of Richardson's heroines present in concrete form opinions frequently stated by him in his letters. Those to Lady Bradshaigh are sufficient to indicate the stand he took. This correspondence belongs in 1750 and 1751. The more important letters are the following:

Lady Bradshaigh to Richardson.

I own I do not approve of great learning in women. I believe it rarely turns out to their advantage. No farther would I have them to

advance, than to what would enable them to write and converse with propriety, and make themselves useful in every stage of life. I hate to hear Latin out of a woman's mouth. There is something in it, to me, masculine. I could fancy such a one weary of the petticoat, and talking over the bottle. You say "the men are hastening apace into dictionary learning." The less occasion still for the ladies to proceed in their's. I should be ashamed of having more learning than my husband. And could we, do you think, help shewing a little contempt, finding ourselves superior in what the husband ought to excel in. Very few women have strength of brain equal to such a trial: and as few men would forego their lordly prerogative, and submit to a woman of better understanding, either natural or acquired. A very uncomfortable life do I see between an ignorant husband and a learned wife. Not that I would have it thought unnecessary for a woman to read, to spell, or speak English; which has been pretty much the case hitherto. I often wonder we can converse at all; much more, that we can write to be understood. Thanks to nature for what we have!

Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

Dear Madam,

You do not approve of great learning in women. Learning in women may be rightly or wrongly placed, according to the uses made of them. And if the sex is to be brought up with a view to make the individuals of it inferior in knowledge to the husbands they may happen to have, not knowing who those husbands are, or what, or whether sensible or foolish, learned or illiterate, it would be best to keep them from writing or reading, and even from the knowledge of the common idioms of speech. Would it not be very pretty for the parents on both sides to make it the first subject of their inquiries, whether the girl as a recommendation, were a greater fool, or more ignorant, than the young fellow; and if not, that they should reject her, for the booby's sake? — and would not your objection stand as strongly against a preference in mother-wit in the girl, as against what is called learning; since linguists, (I will not call all linguists, learned men,) do very seldom make the figure in conversation that even girls, from sixteen to twenty, make.

If a woman have genius, let it take its course, as well as in men: provided she neglect not anything that is more peculiarly her province. If she has good sense, she will not make the man she chuses, who wants her knowledge, uneasy, nor despise him for that want. Her good sense will teach her what is her duty; nor will she want reminding of the tenor of her marriage vow to him. If she has not, she

will find a thousand ways to plague him, though she knew not one word beyond her mother-tongue, nor how to write, read, or speak properly in that. The English, Madam, and particularly what we call the plain English, is a very copious and a very expressive language.

Lady Bradshaigh to Richardson.

I will not approve of learning in women. You, not even you, shall persuade me to it; that is no farther than I have already allowed which I think is pretty extensively; let them study that, domestic duties, and other necessary acquirements, and they will have employment enough to keep them out of mischief, if their inclinations are not strong that way: and if they were as learned as the most learned you can name, I have a notion these same whisperings must, in some degree, be attended to; and whilst they have ears they will be open to flattery and whilst men have tongues these ears will be filled with it. Learning cannot change nature, but it can make a woman ridiculous, a woman of sense I mean. Then, if it was once become customary, all parents would think their children qualified, and say, "If, please God, my girl shall be a scholar," as the men say of their boys, boobies or not: and what figures would most of us make! — Everything moves easiest in its own sphere. Indeed, Sir, great learning would make strange work of us. You know we are to submit and obey; and it is much as ever we can do, often more, in our inferior state of knowledge. I speak of acquired learning. What we have from good sense and natural genius, nobody can take from us. And the more a woman has of those, the better she must appear if along with those, she has good nature and humility.

Richardson to Lady Bradshaigh.

Your Ladyship will not "approve of learning in women." I cannot help it. But do you not think, Madam, that the woman, who, additionally to the advantages she has from nature, "has been taught to read and converse with ease and propriety"; who can read, spell, and speak English; may not be as justly feared by half the pretty fellows of this age, as if she could read and understand Latin?

I do not allow, that because a man is superficial, a woman must be so too, for fear she should meet with a husband to whom she may have a superior understanding. Do you not remember whose these words are? "What a pity it is that true genius and merit should be veiled under the cloud of inactivity and modesty." — "Strange! (adds this favourite of mine) that people will wrap up their talents and hide them."

In your Ladyship's, of January 6, you say, "I hate to hear Latin

out of a woman's mouth: there is something in it to me masculine. I could fancy such a one weary of the petticoat, and talking over a bottle." But, in this case, will not vanity and conceit shew themselves, where they are predominant, in a man's as much as in a woman's mind? Are there not pedantic men? Miss C—— [1] is an example that woman may be trusted with Latin and even Greek, and yet not think themselves above their domestic duties. But after all, I contend not that women should be taught either of these languages; nor do I hold languages to be great learning, as I hinted in my former. A linguist and a learned man may very well be two persons. Meantime, all that I contend for, is, that genius, whether in men or women, should take its course: that, as the ray of divinity, it should not be suppressed. But I acknowledge that the great and indispensable duties of women are of the domestic kind; and that, if a woman neglect these, or despise them, for the sake of science itself, which I call learning, she is good for nothing.

But would you not, Madam, have called me by some hard name, had I supposed the sex, in general, so conceited, so self-sufficient, so naturally weak in judgment, as you do? and had I asserted, that the more they knew, the worse they would be for it? I believe, I have observed in a former, that neither of us will let anyone but ourselves speak slightly of the sex.

Lady Bradshaigh to Richardson (*March* 29, 1751).

I think we pretty nearly agree, as to learning in women. And I was glad to find our opinion corresponding with an author esteemed by the judicious. In the letters of Balzac to Mr. Chapelain, are the following words: "I could more willingly tolerate a woman with a beard, than one that pretends to learning. In earnest, had I authority in the civil government, I would condemn all those women to the distaff, that undertook to write books, that transform their souls by masculine disguise, and break the rank they hold in the world."

Few bits of correspondence could be more illuminating. Lady Bradshaigh holds the conventional mid-century view while Richardson represents the most advanced feminist ideas of his day. Mrs. Makin, Mary Astell, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and "Sophia" asked hardly more than Richardson freely grants.

In his letters to Miss Margaret Collier, Richardson is most

[1] "The elder Miss Collier," mentioned in a previous letter.

earnest in his defense of literary women. In answer to her complaint that Fielding's *Voyage to Lisbon* was counted an inferior work and hence attributed to her, he "inveighed vehemently" against women who published anonymously, and wished it in his power to punish those geniuses of the female sex who studiously "wrapped up their napkin'd talents," elaborately concealing their "God-*given* talents." "What is it that they fear? . . . Is it that the men will be afraid of them, and shun them as wives? Unworthy fear! Let the wretches shun and be afraid of them. Unworthy of such blessings, let such men not dare to look up to merits so superior to their own; and let them enter into contract with women, whose sense is as diminutive as their own souls." Miss Collier answers (with a deep sigh) that a preference for "little-minded creatures" and an aversion to women of uncommon understanding is not confined to the wretches he anathematizes, but is as characteristic of "men of real good sense, great parts, and many fine qualities." Miss Collier styles Richardson "the vindicator" of her sex, but he holds his wrath and asks, "Who shall vindicate the honour of a sex, the most excellent of which desert themselves?" [1]

Henry Fielding

Fielding has, in *Tom Jones*, an entertaining learned lady in the person of Mrs. Western, the sister of Squire Western. She was of a masculine form, near six foot high, which, added to her manner and learning, possibly prevented the other sex from regarding her, notwithstanding her petticoats, in the light of a woman. "She had considerably improved her mind by study; she had not only read all the modern plays, operas, oratorios, poems, and romances — in all which she was a critic — but had gone through Rapin's *History of England*, Eachard's *Roman History*, and many French *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire:* to these she had added most of the political pamphlets and journals published within the last twenty years. From which she had obtained a very competent

[1] *Correspondence of Richardson* (ed. Barbauld): "Correspondence between Miss M. Collier, Miss Fielding, and Mr. Richardson." Vol. II, pp. 59–112.

skill in politics, and could discourse very learnedly on the affairs of Europe." Squire Western did not approve of his sister's learned tastes. "You know," he says, "I do not love to hear you talk about politics; they belong to us, and petticoats should not meddle."

But in Fielding's attitude towards his sister's work, and in the personal opinions he expressed in the prefaces to her novels, we find quite a different tone.[1] Mrs. Western represented a self-assertive, pretentious woman whose claim to learning was without justification, and as such Fielding satirized her. For a modest woman of real learning and ability Fielding had great respect.

Pompey the Little (1757)

In Coventry's *Pompey the Little* is a satirical sketch of a "Lady Sophister" who had visited most of the courts of Europe and who affected a character of wisdom. We first meet her at the bedside of Lady Tempest who is being attended by Dr. Kildarby and Dr. Rhubarb. Lady Sophister had associated with the *literati* in France "where the ladies affect a reputation of science, and are able to discourse on the profoundest questions of theology and philosophy." She had somehow caught up with the notion that the soul is not immortal, and she never found herself in the company of learned men without launching forth into a discussion of this subject. "This extraordinary principle, to show that she did not take up her notions lightly and wantonly, she was able to demonstrate; and could appeal to the greatest authorities in defence of it. She had read Hobbes, Malebranche, Locke, Shaftesbury, Woolaston, and many more. But Locke was her principal favourite, and consequently she rested chiefly upon him to furnish her with quotations whenever her ladyship pleased to engage in controversy." She attacks the two doctors with, "Have you ever read Mr. Locke's controversy with the Bishop of Worcester?" and hardly waiting to triumph over their confused attempts to evade the question she proceeds:

[1] See p. 235.

"What do you esteem the soul to be? Is it air, or fire, or æther, or a kind of quintessence, as Aristotle observed — a composition of all the elements? . . . You know Mr. Locke observes there are various kinds of matter. But first we should define matter, which, you know, the logicians tell us is an extended solid substance. Out of this matter some is made into rose and peach-trees; the next form which matter takes is animal life; from whence we have lions and elephants and all the race of brutes: then the last, as Mr. Locke observes, is thought, and reason, and volition, from whence are created men; and therefore, you plainly see it is impossible for the soul to be immortal." Dr. Rhubarb is dazed by this fluent reasoning, but protests he can recall nothing in Locke about roses and peach-trees and elephants and lions. "Nay, sir," cried she, "can you deny me this? If the soul is fire, it must be extinguished; if air, it must be dispersed; if it be only a modification of matter, then of course it ceases when matter is no longer modified; if it be anything else, it is exactly the same thing: and therefore you must confess — indeed, doctor, you must confess — that it is impossible for the soul to be immortal." [1] Before such a rapid fire of phrases the doctors retire discomfited. It was generally thought that Mr. Coventry meant this sketch for Lady Orford, but even without this personal reference the passage would stand as Coventry's estimate of many of the women of his day who were devoting themselves to metaphysics and knots of divinity.

Jonathan Swift

There is no more concise summing up of the arguments generally advanced against the education of women in the first half of the eighteenth century than that given by Swift in the opening paragraphs of his essay entitled *On the Education of Ladies:*

It is argued that the great end of marriage is propagation; that, consequently, the principal business of a wife is to breed children, and to

[1] Coventry: *Pompey the Little,* book I, chap. VII.

take care of them in their infancy: That the wife is to look to her family, watch over the servants, see that they do their work: That she be absent from her house as little as possible: That she is answerable for everything amiss in the family: That she is to obey all the lawful commands of her husband, and visit or be visited by no persons whom he disapproves: That her whole business, if well performed, will take up most hours of the day: That the greater she is, and the more servants she keeps, her inspection must increase accordingly: for, as a family represents a kingdom, so the wife, who is her husband's first minister, must, under him, direct all the officers of state, even to the lowest; and report their behavior to her husband, as the first minister does to his prince: That such a station requires much time, and thought, and order; and, if well executed, leaves but little time for visits or diversions: That a humor of reading books, except those of devotion or housewifery, is apt to turn a woman's brain: That plays, romances, novels, and love-poems, are only proper to instruct them how to carry on an intrigue: That all affectation of knowledge, beyond what is merely domestic, renders them vain, conceited, and pretending: That the natural levity of woman wants ballast; and when she once begins to think she knows more than others of her sex, she will begin to despise her husband, and grow fond of every coxcomb who pretends to any knowledge in books: That she will learn scholastic words; make herself ridiculous by pronouncing them wrong, and applying them absurdly in all companies: That in the meantime, her household affairs, and the care of her children, will be wholly laid aside; her toilet will be crowded with all the under-wits, where the conversation will pass in criticising on the last play or poem that comes out, and she will be careful to remember all the remarks that were made, in order to retail them in the next visit, especially in company who know nothing of the matter: That she will have all the impertinence of a pedant, without the knowledge; and for every new acquirement, will become so much the worse.[1]

This essay breaks off abruptly so that we cannot tell in what spirit Swift planned to carry on the discussion. But in "A Letter to a Very Young Lady on her Marriage" [2] we get a somewhat fuller statement showing his contempt for women in gen-

[1] Swift, Jonathan: *Works* (ed. Sir Walter Scott), vol. IX, pp. 260–64.

[2] "Mrs. Pilkington pretends that this letter was written on Lady Betty Moore's Marriage with Mr. George Rochfort. But Mr. Faulkner, who is the more sound authority, supposed it addressed to Mrs. John Rochford, daughter of Dr. Staunton." (Swift: *Works*, ed. Scott, vol. IX, p. 203 n.)

eral, but indicating possibilities in the way of improvement in specific cases:

As divines say, That some people take more pains to be damned, than it would cost them to be saved; so your sex employ more thought, memory and application to be fools, than would serve to make them wise and useful. When I reflect on this I cannot conceive you to be human creatures, but a certain sort of species hardly a degree above a monkey; who has more diverting tricks than any of you, is an animal less mischievious and expensive, might in time be a tolerable critic in velvet and brocade, and, for ought I know, would equally become them. . . . It is a little hard that not one gentleman's daughter in a thousand should be brought to read or understand her own natural tongue, or to be judge of the easiest books that are written in it; as any one may find, who can have the patience to hear them, when they are disposed to mangle a play or novel, where the least word out of the common road is sure to disconcert them; and it is no wonder when they are not so much as taught to spell in their childhood, nor can ever attain to it in their whole lives. . . . I know very well that those who are commonly called learned women, have lost all manner of credit by their impertinent talkativeness; but there is an easy remedy for this, if you once consider, that after all the pains you may be at, you never can arrive in point of learning to the perfection of a school boy.[1]

In harmony with this low estimate of the attainments of women is Swift's famous aphorism, "A very little wit is valued in a woman as we are pleased with a few words spoken plain by a parrot." [2] Too much emphasis could easily be given this utterance. It should be remembered that it was not part of a well-

[1] Swift: *Works*, ed. Scott, vol. IX, p. 209. De Quincey has an interesting comment on this passage: "Often, indeed, I had occasion to remember the cynical remark of Swift that, after all, as respects mere learning, the most accomplished woman is hardly on a level with a schoolboy. In quoting this saying, I have restricted it so as to offer no offence to the female sex intellectually considered. Swift probably meant to undervalue women generally. Now, I am well aware that they have their peculiar province. But that province does not extend to *learning*, technically so called. No woman ever was or will be a *polyhistor*, like Salmasius, for example; nor a philosopher; nor, in fact anything whatsoever, called by what name you like, which demands either of these two combinations which follow: — 1, great powers of combination, that is, of massing or grouping under large comprehensive principles; or, 2, severe logic." (*Works*, ed. Masson, vol. XIV, p. 125.)

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. IX, p. 227.

considered theory. It was merely one of the many unrelated sayings written down when Swift and Pope resolved to commit to paper all the maxims, epigrams, and short reflections on life that they could think of in a day.[1] The philosophy expressed counted for less than witty phrasing.

So, too, with Swift's brutal attacks on Mary Astell's college. It is given undue significance if it is interpreted simply as an attack on higher education for women. His derision of the college was an angry outburst against a particular learned woman who had used her wit to make fun of the Kit-Kat Club. It was Mary Astell the satirist rather than Mary Astell the defender of learned women who awakened his spleen.[2]

On the whole, Swift seems to have been favorably disposed towards women of genuine and unpretentious learning. His friendly services to the Irish poetesses, especially to Mrs. Barber and Mrs. Pilkington, while rather condescending in tone, nowhere indicates any condemnation of their aspirations in the way of writing and publishing. In the "Letter to a Very Young Lady" he comments unfavorably on the women who spend their youth in exploiting their beauty, and their later years in visits and cards, and says, "Whereas I have known ladies at sixty, to whom all the polite part of court and town paid their addresses, without any further view than that of enjoying the pleasure of their conversation." And he advised the young wife to seek out good books and elevating conversation in order to raise herself above the general degrading level of her sex:

> You must improve your mind by closely pursuing such a method of study as I shall direct or approve of. You must get a collection of history and travels, which I will recommend to you, and spend some hours every day in reading them, and making extracts from them if your memory be weak. You must invite persons of knowledge and understanding to an acquaintance with you, by whose conversation you will learn to correct your taste and judgment.[3]

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[1] Swift: *Works*, ed. Scott, vol. IX, p. 217.
[2] See p. 303. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. IX, p. 208.

More convincing still is Swift's estimate of Stella. From her childhood he had trained her mind and selected her reading, and we must assume that he had formed her character and determined her acquirements according to the feminine model he most admired. When he praised her it was her intelligence on which he put emphasis. He said of her:

> Never was any of her sex born with better gifts of mind, or who more improved them by reading and conversation. . . . She was well versed in the Greek and Roman story, and was not unskilled in that of France and England. She spoke French perfectly, but forgot much of it by neglect and sickness. She had read carefully all the best books of travel, which served to open and enlarge the mind. She understood the Platonic and Epicurean philosophy, and judged very well of the defects of the latter. She made very judicious abstracts of the best books she had read. She understood the nature of government, and could point out all the errors of Hobbes, both in that and in religion. She had a good insight into physic, and knew somewhat of anatomy; in both which she was instructed in her younger days by an eminent physician, who had her long under his care, and bore the highest esteem for her person and understanding. She had a true taste of wit and good sense, both in poetry and prose, and was a perfect good critic of style. Although her knowledge, from books and company, was much more extensive than usually falls to the share of her sex, yet she was so far from making a parade of it, that her female visitants, on their first acquaintance, who expected to discover it by what they call hard words and deep discourse, would be sometimes disappointed, and say, "They found she was like other women." But wise men, through all her modesty, whatever they discoursed on, could easily observe that she understood them very well, by the judgment shown in her observations, as well as in her questions.[1]

Swift did not consider a woman as a slave or a toy. An alert mind, a fund of varied information, an intelligent interest in books and general affairs, seemed to him necessary qualifications in a woman who would be a suitable companion for a man of sense.

Alexander Pope

Pope was interested in questions of education and general learning. His own training had not come through the regular channels of public schools and university, so perhaps as an observer *ab extra* the defects

[1] Craik, Henry: *Life of Jonathan Swift*, vol. II, Appendix XI.

of the system were more apparent to him than to those brought up in it. At any rate he protested against corporal punishment, against the monotony of a narrow and fixed curriculum, against vague metaphysics and dry-as-dust textual criticism. But in this general discussion he did not touch upon the question of woman's education. His attitude towards learned ladies was a personal one. When he was in love with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the luster of her "heavenly mind," her learning, and her wisdom, were celebrated along with the grace and beauty depicted by Kneller.[1] But when she was no longer in favor she became "that dang'rous thing, a female wit." [2] In *The Rape of the Lock* he addressed the wayward goddess of the Cave of Spleen as:

> Parent of vapors and of female wit,
> Who give th' hysteric, or poetic fit,
> On various tempers act by various ways,
> Make some take physic, others scribble plays.[3]

The "women-wits" apparently protested against these lines, or at least Lady Winchilsea did, and he responded with a conciliatory *Impromptu to Lady Winchilsea*, six lines of which are as follows:

> In vain you boast Poetic Names of yore,
> And cite those Sapphos we admire no more:
> Fate doomed the Fall of every Female Wit;
> But doomed it then, when first Ardelia writ.
> Of all examples by the world confess'd,
> I knew Ardelia could not quote the best.

But Pope is never as undisguisedly himself in eulogy as he is in satire, and his real opinions probably came out when he and Gay and Arbuthnot sat down to write a play which should adequately represent their separate and combined hostilities. The assignment to Pope of the character of Phœbe Clinket, the authoress, shows not only his attitude towards Lady Winchil-

[1] *On the Picture of Lady M. Wortley Montagu by Kneller.*
[2] *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, ll. 368–69 and note.
[3] *The Rape of the Lock*, canto IV, ll. 59–62.

sea, but probably towards the tribe of women wits as well.[1] "Most women have no characters at all" [2] is Pope's general summary; and the highest compliment he could pay to Martha Blount, the woman for whom he cared most, was that she had "Sense and Good Humour." [3] In any comparison with Stella, Martha Blount seems a very commonplace personage to rank as a poet's friend.

Bishop Burnet

Bishop Burnet opposed Mary Astell's plan for a college, and he disliked any pushing into public affairs by women. "I thought," he said, "there were two sorts of persons that ought not to meddle in affairs, though upon very different accounts. These were churchmen and women. We ought to be above it, and women were below it." And when he first heard of Lady Margaret Kennedy, he was unwilling to meet her because of her unfeminine interest in politics.

Yet Bishop Burnet was not absolutely opposed to the education of women. When he gave instructions as to the choice of a wife, "a good understanding" and "a liberal education" were among the characteristics to be sought. His objection to Mary Astell's plan was due to his fear that a lay monastery such as she described might be hostile to the interests of the Church. He even advocated academies devoted to "women's education and religious retreat," and he thought that "monasteries without vows" might be set on foot in such a fashion as to be "the honor of a Queen on her throne." [4]

He also found especial pleasure in the society of educated women. When he finally met Lady Margaret Kennedy, he fell in love with her in spite of her politics. They were married in 1671, and when, after her death, he summed up her character, he put particular stress on her intellectual attainments. "She was a woman," he wrote, "of much knowledge, had read

[1] See *Three Hours after Marriage*, p. 393.
[2] *Epistle II. To a Lady. Of the Characters of Women.* [3] *Ibid.*
[4] T. E. S. Clarke and H. C. Foxcroft: *Life of Bishop Burnet*, p. 436.

vastly; she understood both French, Italian and Spanish; she knew the old Roman and Greek authors well in the translations; she was an excellent historian and knew all our late affairs exactly well, and had many things in her to furnish out much conversation." [1]

Bishop Burnet's second wife was Mrs. Mary Scott, whom he married in Holland about 1687. In the *Life of Burnet* it is said of her: "With these advantages of birth, she had those of a fine person; was well skilled in drawing, music, and painting; and spoke Dutch, English, and French equally well. Her knowledge in matters of divinity was such as might rather be expected from a student than from a lady. She had a fine understanding and sweetness of temper, and excelled in all the qualifications of a dutiful wife, a prudent mistress of a family, and a tender mother of children." [2]

Bishop Burnet's third wife has already been noted as a religious writer. Her work was brought to completion and publication through his encouragement and coöperation.

He also chose intellectual women as friends. He corresponded with Mrs. Wharton, and wrote frequent poems to her, and said he "rejoiced in her life and friendship beyond all things of this world." Nor did the fact that she was an authoress disturb him. He even wrote verses in imitation of her verses.[3]

It is evident that Dr. Burnet enjoyed the individual woman of alert intelligence and trained mind, but that he deprecated any but the most carefully guarded schemes for a general extension of educational advantages to women.

John Wesley

John Wesley was always susceptible to the charms of women, but his lack of discrimination and insight in regard to them led to several disastrous affairs of the heart, and finally, at forty-eight, to a more disastrous

[1] Foxcroft, H. C.: *Supplement to Burnet's History of My Own Times*, p. 85.
[2] *Letters of Lady Russell*, vol. II, p. 2 n.
[3] *A Paraphrase on the 53d Chapter of Isaiah in imitation of Mrs. Anne Wharton.*

marriage. These circumstances must be taken into consideration in reading his various utterances on married life. In a tract on *Marriage* he wrote that the duties of a wife may all be reduced to two: 1. She must recognize herself as the inferior of her husband. 2. She must behave as such. No such order of precedence had prevailed in the Epworth rectory, and the mother he almost worshiped would have scorned such rules. They grew rather from his unhappy union with the domineering, suspicious, obstinate Mrs. Vazeille. When he wrote to her, "Be content to be a private, insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience. Then shall I govern you with gentle sway, and show that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the Church"; he was not so much expressing his idea of inevitable masculine authority, as he was trying to calm one woman whose jealous frenzies destroyed his private happiness and threatened to injure his work.[1]

John Duncomb: The Feminead (1751)

John Duncomb's *Feminead: or, Female Genius,* was written in 1751 when he was but twenty-two. It is a tame and feeble production, but since it antedates Mr. Ballard's *Memoirs* and the *Eminent Ladies,* Mr. Duncomb's glorification of female genius should have at least the credit of being an original idea. And however halting the expression, his poem embodied a genuine enthusiasm that puts it in line with the newer ideas of the mid-eighteenth century. The list of learned ladies presented is not a long one. Comedy writers and writers of personal memoirs are sorrowfully and briefly dismissed as followers of a wanton muse. The virtuous ladies celebrated are led, of course, by the chaste Orinda. Those who succeed her are Lady Winchilsea, Mrs. Cockburn, Mrs. Rowe, the Countess of Hertford, Viscountess Irwin, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Madan, Mrs. Leapor, Miss Carter, Mrs. Brooks, Miss Ferrar, Miss Pennington, Miss Mulso, and Miss Highmore. Several of these ladies find their only com-

[1] Winchester: *Life of Wesley,* p. 179.

memoration here. The Viscountess Irwin is deserving of "a grateful tribute from all female hands" because she rescued her sex's cause from the aspersions cast upon it by Mr. Pope in his *On the Characters of Women*. The poetical epistle of the Viscountess in rebuttal of his charges proved to be a true Ithuriel's spear, and disarmed the witlings. Miss Pennington (afterwards Mrs. Peckard) wrote two odes on "Cynthia" and the "Spring" that appeared in Dodsley's *Collection*, volume V. Miss Pennington's *The Copper Farthing*, a burlesque imitation of Philips's *Splendid Shilling*, was printed in Dilly's *Repository*, volume I. She died in 1759, aged twenty-five. The others in the list are spoken of elsewhere in these pages, so need no further comment here.

The poems open with an invocation to Richardson as "The sex's friend and constant patron." And there is a passage of national congratulation over the freedom with which British nymphs wander in the groves of Wisdom:

> Ev'n now fond Fancy in our polish'd land
> Assembled shews a blooming, studious band:
> With various arts our reverence they engage,
> Some turn the tuneful, some the moral page;
> These led by Contemplation, soar on high,
> And range the Heavens with philosophic eye;
> While those surrounded by a vocal choir,
> The canvas tinge, or touch the warbling lyre.

Young Mr. Duncomb of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, was looking up his illustrations of female genius at the same time that Mr. Ballard of Magdalen, Oxford, was getting his elaborate *Memoirs* ready for the press. And each writer was apparently influenced in his views by some specific woman scholar or writer whom he knew and admired, and through whom he was led into a championship of the general cause. As the learned Miss Elstob, and the pretty coin-loving sister, stimulated Mr. Ballard, so Susanna Highmore apparently gave direction to Mr. Duncomb's enthusiasm. He loved Miss Highmore (1730?–1812) through a protracted courtship of

more than twelve years. She is the "Eugenia" of his poem and is described as "The Muse's pupil from her tenderest years." She was the daughter of Joseph Highmore, the artist. She belonged to the Richardson coterie and was one of the group to whom he read *Sir Charles Grandison*. Her sketch of the scene forms the frontispiece to the second volume of Mrs. Barbauld's *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*. Her *Fidelio and Honoria* is the best known of her writings.

George Ballard: Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain

In 1752 there was published at Oxford a significant book entitled *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain, who have been Celebrated for their Writings or Skill in the Learned Languages Arts and Sciences*. The author of this book was George Ballard of whose obscure life but a few chance details have reached our day. This is the more to be regretted since he was evidently a person of marked individuality. He was born in Campden, Gloucestershire, in 1706. His father was a poor man, and it was necessary for the children to be put early to work. Since George was sickly an easy trade was found for him and he was apprenticed to a stay-maker, or woman's habit-maker. His literary tastes were early apparent. At fourteen he read Fox's *Acts and Monuments of the Church*, various books of polemical divinity, and a number of books against dissenters. He had antiquarian tastes, and while still young began a collection of coins. Our most definite picture of him is as a young man of twenty, still a stay-maker, but already well known as an indefatigable collector. In the summer of 1726 Mr. R. Graves wrote to Mr. Hearne as follows:

> At Campden in Gloucestershire lives one Mr. Ballard, a Taylor, who hath a Daughter, a very pretty Girl, of about fourteen Years of Age, that hath an extraordinary Genius for Coins, & hath made an odd Collection of them. Mr. Granger (who came from thence last Night in his Return from London) saw her, and speaks much of her, w^ch^ I took the more notice of because he is himself a good Judge of Coins, & hath an admirable Collection of them, especially of English

ones. But, it seems, this young Girl is chiefly delighted with those that are Roman.[1]

In February of the next year he wrote again:

The bearer is the young tailor of Campden who has collected so many odd coins. . . . The young Man, whose name is George Ballard has been all about the Country to pick up old money, and has got a great Number. . . . When he has gott any new that I have not seen, he brings 'em to me to tell him whose they are. . . . I suppose he will bring some of them with him to shew you.[2]

In March Mr. Hearne recorded the visit of Mr. Ballard:

Yesterday, in the afternoon, called upon me Mr. George Ballard, a young man (a Tayllour) of Campden in Gloucestershire, of whom I have heard Mr. Graves speak more than once. This Ballard is an ingenious, curious young man, & hath pickt up abundance of old Coins, some of w^{ch} he shewed me. He hath been at many places about the country for that End. He hath also pickt up many of our Historians, & other English Books, & takes great delight in them, but he is no scholar. He is a mighty admirer of John Fox & talks mightily against the Roman Catholicks, tho' I told him, that there are fifteen thousand Lyes in Fox, & brought him to some sense of the Abuses frequently put upon the poor Catholicks.

He shewd me an old Ed. w^{ch} is the first of *Historia Britannica*. Mr. Ballard told me, about a week ago he met with a curious old Paint upon Board (an original, as he takes it) done excellently well, of Queen Catharine, the divorced wife of Henry VIII.

Mr. Ballard hath a sister (which Mr. Graves used to talk also of) equally curious in Coins and Books with himself. He told me, she is twenty-three years of Age.[3]

There came with Mr. Ballard, one Mr. Ellys, who deals in Laces etc. and is Brother in law to Mr. Ballard, having married another (one elder) Sister of Mr. Ballard's, by whom he hath 2 children.[4]

In May of the same year Mr. Hearne wrote:

Yesterday Mr. Graves of Mickleton called upon us. He told me, that young Ballard the Taylor of Campden is out of his time, & hath very good business at his trade, but that he is now learning Latin,

[1] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. IX, p. 185 (1914). [2] *Ibid.*, vol. IX, p. 277.
[3] Cf. p. 354, where the sister is said to be "about fourteen."
[4] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. IX, p. 282.

going twice a day for that end to the School-master there, and that he hath a great mind to come and enter of [*sic*] some College or Hall in Oxford, but Mr. Graves gives him no encouragement, judging it better (& so I think too) to keep to his Trade. This young Ballard's Great Uncle was a Doctor of Physick. Mr. Graves hath promised to send me some account of him.[1]

In spite of the contradictory statements as to the age of the attractive, coin-loving sister, there emerges from these letters a sufficiently definite picture of a household in which at least two talented young people were carrying on researches in line with the best antiquarian work of the day.

We are not told when Mr. Ballard took up Anglo-Saxon. The letters to and by Mr. Hearne when Ballard was twenty-one and twenty-two do not mention Anglo-Saxon as one of his interests. Six years later we find him on intimate terms with Elizabeth Elstob whose Evesham School was but a few miles from Campden. It does not seem improbable that Miss Elstob introduced this promising young scholar to her own chosen field of work. He was, at any rate, so impressed by the disproportion between her learning and her toil-bound life that he became her knight-errant and finally set in motion influences that resulted in her freedom. Whether Miss Elstob introduced him to Anglo-Saxon, or merely joined her ripe scholarship to his young enthusiasm, their common interest results in a warm friendship that found in Anglo-Saxon its firmest bond.

We have one interesting bit of testimony to the ardor with which Mr. Ballard pursued the new language. He needed an Anglo-Saxon dictionary, but not being able to buy one he borrowed, from Mr. Browne Willis, *Somner's Dictionary*, and made a very beautiful transcript of it, with Thwaites's additions. This transcript was one of the manuscripts bequeathed by Mr. Ballard to the Bodleian. It was a tremendous piece of work, and it is small wonder that Mr. Ballard celebrated its completion by a "festival." [2]

[1] *Hearne's Collections*, vol. IX, p. 304.
[2] *Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. II, p. 118.

The advice given by Mr. Graves, that the ambitious young stay-maker should "keep to his trade," was perforce followed. Most of his life was spent as a tailor at Campden, but in spite of this his fame for scholarship grew apace. In 1750 Lord Chedworth and the gentlemen of his hunt, who annually in the hunting season spent about a month at Campden, heard of his attainments, and they offered him an annuity of £100 for life in order that he might prosecute his studies. He gratefully accepted £60 and set out at once for Oxford. He was made one of the eight clerks of Magdalen College, receiving his rooms and commons free. His life at Oxford was but a continuation of his activities at Campden. He had begun vast collections on various subjects and these he pushed nearer to completion. At his death, however, which occurred in 1755 and was occasioned, it was thought, by too strenuous application to study, the only work he had published was the *Memoirs*. He left to the Bodleian forty-four volumes of manuscripts and original letters, including copies of some of his own writing, and all carefully indexed.[1]

The preparation of the *Memoirs* was well under way before he went to Oxford, for Mr. G. Russell wrote to him, May 15, 1759: "The work you are now engaged in, will I hope rescue us in a great measure from the too just accusation our neglect in Biography has occasioned, and you have this additional satisfaction in prospect, that as the Fair Sex are the subject, so they will be the Protectresses and Guardians of your performance. Their smiles, like a benign planet, will gradually ripen it to perfection, and their breath embalm it to posterity." [2] The original manuscript of the *Memoirs* was in the possession of Mr. Gough and was sold with the rest of his books in 1811.[3] A copy of the first edition, in the Bodleian, contains manuscript notes in the handwriting of the author.[4] A second but inferior edition came out in 1775.

When the *Memoirs* appeared in 1752, it attracted little

[1] *Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. II, p. 147 n.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 123. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 147 n. [4] *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 123 n

attention. The *Monthly Review* for February, 1753, is not laudatory. The editor regrets that Mr. Ballard did not go farther back than the fourteenth century, that he has vainly spent his industry in rescuing from oblivion some ladies who might better have been left there, and finally that "so extraordinary a genius and so excellent a woman as Mrs. Cockburn, is wholly unnoticed in this work." Other criticisms reached Mr. Ballard from private sources. They were based almost entirely on religious and party lines. Mr. Ballard's answer to a letter from Dr. Lyttleton, Dean of Exeter, will sufficiently indicate the tone of these criticisms. It was written May 22, 1753:

The day before I received your first epistle a Gent. of my acquaintance brought me the *Monthly Review* for February, that I might see what the candid and genteel authors of that work had said of mine. They observe to the publick, that *I have said* C. Tishem was so skilled in the Greek tongue, that she could read Galen in its original, which very few Physicians are able to do. Whether this was done maliciously, in order to bring the wrath of the Æsculapians upon me, or inadvertently, I cannot say: but I may justly affirm, that they have used me very ill in that affair; since if they had read with attention, which they ought to have done before they attempted to give a character of the Book, they must have known that the whole account of that Lady (which is but one page) is not mine, but borrowed with due acknowledgement from the *General Dictionary.* They are likewise pleased to inform the world that I have been rather too industrious in the undertaking, having introduced several women who hardly deserved a place in the work. I did not do this for want of materials; neither did I do it rashly, without advising with others of superior judgment in those affairs, of which number Mr. Professor Ward was one. But those pragmatical Censors seem to have but little acquaintance with those studies, or otherwise they might have observed that all our general Biographers, as Leland, Bale, Pits, Wood, and Tanner, have trod the very same steps; and have given an account of all the authors they could meet with, good and bad, just as they found them: and yet, I have never heard of any one that had courage or ill-nature enough, to endeavour to expose them for it. While I was ruminating on these affairs, three or four letters came to my hands, and perceiving one of them come from my worthy friend the Dean of Exeter, I eagerly broke it open, and was perfectly astonished to find myself accused of *party zeal* in my book; and that from thence the most candid reader might conclude the author to be both a Church and State

Tory. But after having thoroughly considered all the passages objected to, and not finding the least tincture of either Whig or Tory principles contained in them, I began to chear up my drooping spirits, in hopes that I might possibly outlive my supposed crime; but, alas! to my still greater confusion! when I opened my next letter from a Tory acquaintance, I was like one thunderstruck at the contents of it. He discharges his passionate but ill-grounded resentment upon me most furiously. He tells me, he did not imagine Magdalen College could have produced such a rank Whig. He reproaches me with want of due esteem for the Stuart Family, to whom he says I have shown a deadly hatred, and he gives me, as he imagines, three flagrant instances of it. 1. That I have unseasonably and maliciously printed a letter of Queen Elizabeth's, in order to blacken the memory of Mary Queen of Scots, and that, too, at a time when her character began to shine as bright as the Sun. 2dly. That I have endeavoured to make her memory odious, by representing her as wanting natural affection to her only son, in my note at p. 162, where he says I have printed part of a Will, etc. And 3dly, tho' she was cut off in such a barbarous and unprecedented manner, yet she has fallen unlamented by me. I am likewise charged with having an affection to Puritanism; the reasons for which are, my giving the Life of a Puritan Bishop's Lady, which it seems need not have been done by me, had I not had a particular regard for her, since it had been done before by Goodwin who reprinted her Devotions. And not content with this, I have blemished my book with the memoirs of a Dissenting teacher's wife, and have been kind enough to heighten even the character given her by her indulgent husband; and that I am very fond of quoting Fox and Burnet upon all occasions. These are thought strong indications of the above-mentioned charge. It may be thought entirely unnecessary to answer any of the objections from Exeter, after having given you this Summary of my kind Friend's Candid Epistle; but to you, Sir, to whom I could disclose the very secrets of my soul, I will endeavour to say a word or two upon this subject, and make you my Confessor upon this Occasion; and I will do it with as much sincerity as if I lay on my deathbed. Before I was fourteen years old, I read over Fox's Acts and Monuments of the Church, and several of the best books of Polemical Divinity, which strongly fortified me in the Protestant Religion; and gave me the greatest abhorrence to Popery. And soon after I perused Mercurius Rusticus, The Eleventh Persecution, Lloyd, Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, and many others, which gave me almost as bad an opinion of the Dissenters. But then I learned in my childhood *to live in Charity with all Men*, and I have used my best endeavours to put this doctrine in practice all my life long. I never thought ill, or

quarrelled with any man merely because he had been educated in principles different to mine; and yet I have been acquainted with many papists, dissenters, etc. and if I found any of them learned, ingenuous, and modest, I always found my heart well-disposed for contracting a firm friendship with them: and notwithstanding that, I dare believe that all those people will, with joint consent, vouch for me, that I have ever been steady in my own principles.

I can truly affirm that never any one engaged in such a work, with an honester heart, or executed it with more unbiassed integrity, than I have done. And indeed, I take the unkind censures passed upon me by the furious uncharitable zealots of both parties, to be the strongest proof of it. And after all, I dare challenge any man, whether Protestant, Papist, or Dissenter, Whig or Tory, (and I have drawn up and published memoirs of women who professed all those principles) to prove me guilty of partiality, or to shew that I have made any uncharitable reflections on any person, and whenever that is done, I will faithfully promise to make a public recantation. I wish, Sir, you would point out to me any one unbecoming word or expression which has fell from me on Bishop Burnet. Had I had the least inclination to have lessened his character, I did not want proper materials to have done it. I have in my possession two original letters from Bishop Gibson and Mr. Norris of Bemerton, to Dr. Charlett, which, if published, would lessen your too great esteem for him. And what, I beseech you, Sir, have I said in praise of Mrs. Hopton and her pious and useful labours, which they do not well deserve, and which can possibly give any just offence to any good man? I dare not censure or condemn a good thing merely because it borders upon the Church of Rome. I rather rejoice that she retains anything I can fairly approve. Should I attempt to do this, might I not condemn the greater part of our Liturgy, etc.? and should I not stand self-condemned for so doing? I cannot for my life perceive that I have said anything of that excellent woman, which she does not merit; and I must beg leave to say that I think her letter to F. Turbeville deserves to be wrote in letters of gold, and ought to be carefully read and preserved by all Protestants. Mary Queen of Scots fell under my notice, no otherwise than as a learned woman. The affairs you mention would by no means suit my peaceable temper. I was too well acquainted with the warm disputes, and fierce engagement both of domestic and foreign writers on that head, once to touch upon the subject. And indeed, unless I had been the happy discoverer of some secret springs of action which would have given new information to the public, it would have been excessive folly in me to intermeddle in an affair of so tender a nature, and of so great importance.

I have often blamed my dear friend Mr. Brome for destroying his valuable collections, but I now cease to wonder at it. He spent his leisure hours pleasantly and inoffensively, and when old age came on, which not only abates the thirst, but oftentimes gives a disrelish to these and almost all other things, which do not help to make our passage into eternity more easy, he then destroyed them (I dare believe) in order to prevent the malicious reflections of an ill-natured world.

I have always been a passionate lover of History and Antiquity, Biography, and Northern Literature: and as I have ever hated idleness, so I have in my time filled many hundred sheets with my useless scribble, the greater part of which I will commit to the flames shortly to prevent their giving me any uneasiness in my last moments.[1]

The bitter feeling indicated by this letter, and the sense of disappointment resulting from criticisms so unsympathetic, must have been considerably mitigated by the noble list of subscribers with which the book was ushered into the world.[2] That would indicate at least a financial success, and doubtless appreciation came from many unrecorded sources.

Mr. Ballard's book is of interest if it were only as a *tour de force* in the way of collecting materials from scattered sources. He sought far and wide for the facts he chronicles. All available biographical dictionaries, general histories, county histories, genealogical records, wills, funeral sermons, epitaphs, published works, private manuscripts, — all became the subjects of his indefatigable inquiries. He sought interviews, he wrote letters, he cajoled information from the most unlikely recesses. And he had an eye for picturesque and personal detail, so that out of his rapid and often disordered assemblage of facts it is

[1] *Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. II, p. 140.

[2] There was at first considerable doubt about the subscriptions. Mrs. Delany wrote in February, 1752: "I can give you no encouragement about Mr. Ballard's getting the Princess of Wales among his subscribers. I don't think the Maid of Honour a proper person to apply to; if he would only leave out his dedication to me *I could* solicit for him, but *as it is*, it has even stopped my applying to get subscriptions." (*Mrs. Delany's Letters*. First Series, vol. III, p. 186.) In December she wrote: "I am afraid Mr. Ballard has not a large subscription; it vexes me that he should prevent my being of use to him, but if we are successful in our affairs I shall hope to *make it up to him*." (*Ibid.*)

possible to reconstruct, in many instances, a vivid impression of real women in their form and habit as they lived. That closer scholarship should now and then find inaccuracies in his statements is no more than should be expected, and should in no degree invalidate his claim to recognition as having done an invaluable piece of research in a biographical realm entirely new.

The *Memoirs* is a handsome volume of 474 pages and contains sixty more or less extended biographies. Except for Queen Elizabeth the longest notice is in the twenty-four pages devoted to Margaret Roper, and the accounts range from that down to eight or ten lines. The order is approximately chronological. The lives are divided into two portions with separate dedications. The first one reads, "To Mrs. Talbot of Kineton in Warwickshire the Following Memoirs of Learned Ladies in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries are most humbly inscribed as an acknowledgement of my sincere and high regard for her and Mr. Talbot and as a small Testimony of Gratitude for Extraordinary Favours conferred by Both of Them upon their most obliged and most devoted humble servant George Ballard." The second dedication was, "To Mrs. Delany the Truest Judge and Brightest Pattern of all the Accomplishments which adorn her Sex these Memoirs of Learned Ladies in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries are most humbly inscribed by her obedient servant George Ballard."

In the Preface Mr. Ballard comments on the value of biographical records and then proceeds to a justification of his own work:

> The present age is so far from being defective in this respect, that it hath produced a greater number of excellent biographers than any preceding times: and yet, I know not how it hath happened, that very many ingenious women of this nation, who were really possessed of a great share of learning, and have, no doubt, in their time been famous for it, are not only unknown to the public in general, but have been passed by in silence by our greatest biographers.
>
> When it is considered how much has been done on this subject by many learned foreigners, we may justly be surprized at this neglect among the writers of this nation; more especially, as it is pretty cer-

tain, that England hath produced more women famous for literary accomplishments, than any other nation in Europe.

. . . . . .

Those, whose memoirs are here offered to the publick, I have placed in the order of time in which they lived; omitting none, of whom I could collect sufficient materials. For as there may yet be some learned women of those times, whose characters I am an entire stranger to; so there are others, whom I well know to have been persons of distinguished parts and learning, but have been able to collect very little else relating to them. Such as, Lady Mary Nevil, Lady Anne Southwell, Lady Honor Hay, Lady Mary Wroath, Lady Armyne, Lady Ranelagh, Lady Anne Boynton (famous for her skill in ancient coins, and noble collection of them) Lady Levet, Lady Warner, Gentlewomen: Mrs. Mabilla Vaughan, Mrs. Elizabeth Grimstone, Mrs. Jane Owen, Mrs. M. Croft, Mrs. Aemillia Sawyer, Mrs. Makins (who corresponded in the learned languages, with Mrs. Anna Maria à Schurman) Mrs. Gertrude More, Mrs. Dorothy Leigh, together with many other learned and ingenious women, since the year 1700; of those latter I have had the good fortune to make very considerable collections: and among the former, I had drawn up an account of Mrs. Carew, in the same manner with the other memoirs, but omitted printing it by mere accident.

The motto on the title-page, "*Et sane qui Sexum alterum ad studia idoneum negant, iam olim rejecti, fuere ab omnibus philosophis,*" expresses the spirit of the book. Mr. Ballard was perfectly genuine in his admiration of learned women. In his impressionable youth he had found his sister as intelligent in collecting old coins and books as he himself. Later the most learned Anglo-Saxon scholar he knew was Miss Elstob. His fervent recognition of his sister's genius, his high sense of Miss Elstob's learning, are but a forecast of the direction of his mature work. He had known two brilliant women, hence he had a belief in the possible intellectual achievements of women. He had seen one of these women, in spite of her constructive and advanced scholarship, consigned to poverty and oblivion, and a sense of injustice took possession of his mind. The championship of Miss Elstob passed over into championship of all learned women. His *Memoirs*, he hopes, will remove "that vulgar prejudice of the supposed incapacity of the

female sex." To accomplish this end he relies in the main on a cool and unemphasized recital of facts. But now and then he allows himself to protest against some especial injustice. For instance, under the "Memoirs of Mary Countess of Pembroke," he says of her translation of the Psalms:

> But then we are informed by Sir John Harington, and afterwards by Mr. Wood, and from him by the late learned Dr. Thomas, that she was assisted by Dr. Babington then chaplain to the family, and afterwards Bishop of Worcester; for, say they, 't was more than a woman's skill to express the sense of the Hebrew so right, as she hath done in her verse; or more than the English or Latin translation could give her. This argument has likewise been made use of by a certain divine to divest another worthy Lady of the honour of an excellent performance, in the composition of which was shown some skill in that primitive language. But why this should be thought a cogent argument to prove it, I am very much at a loss to know; it being not so much as pretended, so far as I can be informed, that there is more skill required, or greater difficulties to be met with in acquiring that language, than there is in attaining an exact knowledge in the Greek and other tongues, which all the world knows numberless women have been perfectly well versed in.
>
> And that the female sex are as capable of learning this as any other language, appears so plain from many undeniable instances of it, as to render any farther disproof as to that assertion unnecessary. Let those who doubt of it, read what St. Jerom has recorded of the noble Lady Paula and her daughter Eustochium. The Lady Paula's character he solemnly professes himself, and that upon a most solemn occasion, to have drawn not in the way of a Panegyric, but to have related everything with the strictest veracity; and therefore will not, I hope, be suspected of flattery, when he tells us that she, in her old age, did speedily learn it; and understood the language so well as to speak it.
>
> Or if this be referring them too far back to antiquity, let them reflect on the extraordinary learning and abilities of Mrs. Anna Maria à Schurman; who was not only well skilled in Greek and Latin, but in the Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Chaldaic, etc. And we are told [in Evelyn's *Numismata*] that Ludovisia Sarracennia, a Physician's daughter of Lyons, understood and spoke Hebrew and Greek at the age of eight years. To let pass many other foreign examples, I shall only observe that our own Kingdom produced several women in the last century, who were famous for their skill in Hebrew, etc. Particularly a young

lady of the North family, who was well versed in the Oriental languages. Mrs. Bland a Yorkshire gentlewoman was so well skilled in it, that she taught it to her son and daughter. Likewise the late Mrs. Bury of Bristol, and others, of whom I need say no more here, since they will be remembered in this catalogue.

Again, under "Lady Pakington," the question of Hebrew comes up. One gentleman has told him that *The Whole Duty of Man* and the other treatises by the same author could not be by a woman because they were too deeply learned, and another gentleman wrote that the "many quotations from Hebrew writers" precluded female authorship. But Mr. Ballard answers:

And since skill in the Hebrew language is made use of as a convincing argument (tho, for my part, I can not find one Hebrew quotation in the whole book) he may please to understand, that besides the justly celebrated Mrs. Anna Maria à Schurman, and many other foreign ladies; we have had several domestic examples of *Women* who have been famed for their skill in that primitive language, viz., Lady Jane Gray, Lady Killigrew, a Lady of the Nottingham family, another Lady of the North family, Lady Ranelagh, Mrs. Bury, and Mrs. Elizabeth Bland of Beeston in Yorkshire.

Poems by Eminent Ladies (1755)

The success of Mr. Ballard's *Memoirs* in 1752 led to the production in 1755 of *Poems by Eminent Ladies*, "Printed for R. Baldwin, at the Rose, in Pater-Noster-Row." [1] The brief Preface reads in part as follows:

These volumes are perhaps the most solid compliment that can possibly be paid to the Fair Sex. They are a standing proof that great abilities are not confined to the men, and that genius often glows with equal warmth, and perhaps with more delicacy, in the breast of a female. The Ladies, whose pieces we have here collected, are not only an honour to their sex, but to their native country; and there can be

[1] The ladies whose poems are included in these volumes are: Mrs. Barber, Mrs. Behn, Miss Carter, Lady Chudleigh, Mrs. Cockburn, Mrs. Grierson, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Killigrew, Mrs. Leapor, Mrs. Madan, Mrs. Masters, Lady M. W. Montagu, Mrs. Monk, Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. K. Philips, Mrs. Pilkington, Mrs. Rowe, Lady Winchilsea.

no doubt of their appearing to advantage together, when they have each severally been approved by the greatest writers of their times. It is indeed a remarkable circumstance, that there is scarce one Lady, who has contributed to fill these volumes, who was not celebrated by her cotemporary poets, and that most of them have been particularly distinguished by the most lavish encomiums either from *Cowley*, *Dryden*, *Roscommon*, *Creech*, *Pope*, or *Swift*.

There is indeed no good reason to be assigned why the poetical attempts of females should not be well received, unless it can be demonstrated that fancy and judgment are wholly confined to one half of our species; a notion, to which the readers of these volumes will not readily assent. It will not be thought partiality to say that the reader will here meet with many pieces on a great variety of subjects excellent in their way; and that this collection is not inferior to any miscellany compiled from the works of men.

. . . . . .

The short accounts of the several writers, prefixed to each of their poems, were compiled from the best materials we could meet with. The life of Mrs. *Behn* in particular, (which is very entertaining) is extracted from *The Lives of the Poets*, by Mr. Theophilus Cibber and others. For many of the rest we are obliged to Mr. *Ballard's* entertaining Memoirs of Learned Ladies.

The two unimpressive volumes of this publication make rather more interesting reading than most miscellanies, but there is no hint of latent genius. The ladies are merely clever versifiers. They manage the heroic couplet with the mechanical skill of Pope's lesser imitators. Their verses jingle in the close with sufficient accuracy. Pope's antitheses and balanced structures, his oratorical figures, his use of pungent personal portraiture, are characteristics that find many enfeebled echoes. In subject-matter and general tone the books present an impeccable front. The authors would be sure to prefer Steele's *Ladies' Library* to Mrs. Pilkington's *Love in Excess*, yet they are not conspicuously strait-laced. The poems are nearly all occasional and gain thus a note of reality, and, though no lady attains to genuine humor or actual lightness of touch, there are evidences of a brightness of spirit, a vivacity, a quickness of repartee, that remove the poems from the realm of the purely imitative and conventional.

Among the literary curiosities of the eighteenth century are two books by Thomas Amory. One of these, *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain*, appeared in 1755 in two volumes. The first volume of the second work, *The Life of John Buncle*, was published in 1756, and a second volume appeared in 1766. When he began the *Memoirs* he had planned to extend the series to eight volumes, but he did not carry it beyond the second volume of *John Buncle*. The full title of the *Memoirs* [1] indicates its character as a medley of unrelated observations, disquisitions, and opinions. *John Buncle* has a less erratic plan, some order being given by the fact that the hero engages in seven successive matrimonial ventures in the course of his travels through Yorkshire and the Lake District. But the books are alike in aim, both being an exposition of Christian Deism. John Buncle's wives are all either able advocates of Socinianism when he meets them, or they have minds so attempered that on hearing the tenets of that faith they ardently embrace it. The ladies in both books are introduced with a Defoe-like apparatus of seemingly accurate details as to dates, locations, and particular circumstances. Although these ladies have had a great variety of romantic adventures and differ somewhat as to wealth and social position, they are essentially alike in character and function, the one purpose of the author being through them to exemplify and explain his religious beliefs. The interesting point is that Mr. Amory in creating ideal and learned defenders of his views should have chosen young ladies. And this was deliberately done. He states it as his conviction "that the faculties and imagination of women's minds properly cultivated may equal those of the greatest men," and he advocates a higher education for young women

Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain (1755)

[1] *Memoirs: Containing the Lives of Several Ladies of Great Britain. A History of Antiquities, Productions of Nature and Monuments of Art. Observations on the Christian Religion, as professed by the Established Church, and Dissenters of every Denomination. Remarks on the Writings of the greatest English Divines: with a Variety of Disquisitions and Opinions relative to Criticisms and Manners; and many extraordinary Actions.*

of sufficient fortune: "It would be so far from making them those ridiculous mortals Molière has described under the character of learned ladies; that it would render them more agreeable and useful, and enable them by the acquisition of true sense and knowledge, to be superior to gayety, dress and dissipation. They would be glorious creatures then. Every family would be happy."

In accordance with this view his young ladies in the *Memoirs* and *John Buncle* have not only virtue, wealth, and beauty, but learning of the most specialized and difficult sort. One girl of twenty had been for five years studying under the tutelage of a Scotchman and had attained great proficiency in "arithmetic, Algebra, and fluxions." On her first interview with the author she discoursed for ten uninterrupted pages on the method of fluxions and so wrought upon her hearer's admiration that "for a full quarter of an hour after she ceased he sat looking at her in the greatest astonishment." But he recovered sufficiently to secure the mathematical prodigy as his fourth wife. Another "master in the fluxionary way" was a Mrs. Benslow, and most of the ladies found a perennial source of joy in algebra and arithmetic. But the realm in which their minds luxuriated was that of speculative theology. They read books on religious faiths, ancient and modern, they discussed the most abstruse problems of metaphysics, and they carried ethical problems into the most attenuated ramifications.

The lady who seems to be in all ways Mr. Amory's ideal is Miss Harriot Eusebia Harcourt. She appears in both books, and in definiteness of personality is superior to any of the other characters. It is not impossible that Amory gives under her name a highly idealized portrait of some one he knew. The *Biographium Femineum*, published in 1766, was so impressed by Miss Harcourt as to catalogue her among distinguished Englishwomen, but the entire account seems to be based on Amory's characterization. She is also admitted as a real person in *Female Biography*, by Miss Mary Hays, in 1803, and in Rose's *New Biographical Dictionary*, in 1839. But Miss Har-

court is almost certainly a fictitious character. If any woman had really accomplished what is described in Amory's books, it is incredible that there should have been no contemporary notice of so novel an experiment.[1]

According to Amory, Miss Harcourt was born in 1705. She received a learned education supplemented by nine years of travel in Europe with her father who secured for her the best masters in the languages of the different countries, so that she became an accomplished linguist. On the death of her father in 1733 she inherited a large fortune which she was free to spend according to her own ideas. Her acquaintanceship with noble nuns in various parts of Europe had convinced her that a life similar to theirs, but outside the Catholic Church, would be ideal. She thereupon returned to England and with eleven like-minded ladies she organized a society of "Reformed Recluses." On her estate in Richmondshire she built a beautiful cloister as a winter residence. In the summer the Society occupied a charming villa on the Green Island, a part of her father's property in the western islands of Scotland. Amory says that he was shipwrecked on this island and that during his long stay there he became intimately acquainted with the details of Miss Harcourt's scheme of life. On so agreeable a theme he allowed his imagination free rein. The magnificent situation of the Green Island gave full scope for descriptions of wild and romantic scenery.[2] For the things wrought by the hand of man in the grounds about the villa, he had but to take hints from

[1] The *Memoirs* (vol. II, p. 87) say that Miss Harcourt "died suddenly, at her seat in Richmondshire, the first of December 1745, in the 39th year of her age, and not in the year thirty-seven, as the world was told in several advertisements in the London Evening Post of December 1739, by a gentleman who was imposed on in a false account he received of her death." I have been unable to examine the *London Evening Post* to see whether it contains any announcement correspondent to Amory's statement. (Rose says she was born in 1706 at Richmond in Yorkshire and that she died in 1745.)

[2] For Amory's exceptionally early and eager descriptions of the English Lake District see Reynolds, Myra: *External Nature in English Poetry between Pope and Wordsworth* (2d ed.), p. 208. To this must now be added his distinction as one of the earliest Englishmen to be interested in the islands off the coast of Scotland.

some of the great English gardens, notably that at Stowe. The Elysium, the marble busts, the Rotunda, at Stowe, were almost certainly the original of his Elysian Fields, groups of marble statues, and Orbicular Building. And as these external details stimulated his fancy to the production of an Aladdin-like garden, so such suggestions as those of Mary Ward's "Institute," or especially Mary Astell's "Protestant Nunnery," stimulated his active mind into working out the details of such a plan. He described not only the constitution of such a society, its financial status, and its general aims, but he went into all the minutiæ of dress, meals, social customs, diversions, occupations. The ladies paid £500 on entrance, they took no vows of celibacy, they had no prioress, they lived well, they had abundant service, they dressed richly. The badge of their order was a large diamond cross. No one was admitted who had not a taste for music. Musical composition, playing on different instruments, singing, painting, and drawing were the elegant diversions. There was a large and well-selected library, and the ladies made researches according to their taste, with the proviso that once a week they must read to the rest the result of their labors — a sort of multifarious and inchoate seminar. The approved papers were recorded in a club book called *Didaskalia*. These ladies being Christian deists and having minds unclouded by the mists of superstition, enthusiasm, and atheism, spent much time in rational devotion. Mr. Amory becomes ecstatic as the picture of this ideal society grows under his hand and finally declares that if he were a woman of fortune he would at once seek out this happy society of religious recluses with a certainty that no other life on the globe could offer such felicity. He approves of Miss Harcourt's last act which was to will her large fortune as an endowment for this cloistral house. A fanciful dream, but one that constantly brings to mind Tennyson's *Princess*. Only to Amory's Green Island there came no disrupting influences of love and childhood. He left his ladies still enjoying their learned seclusion, and filling volume after volume of the *Didaskalia*, painting great pictures, producing

original oratorios, making abstruse speculations, and serving God with calm hearts.[1]

[1] For further accounts of Thomas Amory see *The Gentleman's Magazine*, November, 1788 (vol. LVIII, p. 1062), where there is a protest from Robert Amory concerning erroneous statements about his father in the *St. James's Chronicle* of November 6 (cf. vol. LIX, pp. 107, 322, 372); *General Biographical Dictionary* (1798); Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary;* Hazlitt's *Round Table* (1817); *Retrospective Review* (vol. VI, p. 100, 1st Series, 1822); edition of Amory's *Works* (1825); *Notes and Queries*, 1st Series, vol. XI, p. 58; *Saturday Review*, May 12, 1877. From these references it becomes apparent that Amory has attracted considerable attention, but that there is a wide divergence of opinion as to whether he was insane or a genius.

CHAPTER V

SATIRIC REPRESENTATIONS OF THE LEARNED LADY IN COMEDY

The artificial comedy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in England is of genuine significance as a social document. Its purpose was to hold up to ridicule whatever in contemporary life, especially the life of the every-day middle-class world, could be counted foolish or absurd. In its pages nearly every phase of ordinary human activity could look upon its more or less distorted image, and the taste and temper of the times are pretty fairly measured by the personages accepted by dramatists, actors, and audiences as legitimate sources of comic appeal.

Literature offered a surprisingly rich field to the writers of comedy. Tragedies and comedies, the new Italian opera, farces, pantomimes, harlequinades, pastoral dramas, were parodied, burlesqued, and criticized on the stage. Individual authors, theater-managers, actors, and actresses, were ever-recurring figures in the popular comedy. Quite a little library might, for instance, be gathered of the satiric representations of Colley Cibber, Theophilus Cibber, and Susanna Maria Cibber.

Other popular comic types were heroes and heroines marked by national characteristics. An illuminating social study might be made of the Irishman in comedy, the many ancestors of Sheridan's "Sir Lucius O'Trigger," as "Sir Teague O'Divelly," "Sir Calligan O'Bralligan," "Mr. O'Connor MacCormack," "Major O'Flaherty," and the rest of the truculent, honey-tongued, generous, blundering tribe. There are stage Scotchmen and Welshmen represented by "Sir Pertinax MacSycophant," "Mr. Apreece," and their congeners. The Frenchman as valet, music-master, dancing-master, and villain-in-ordinary to the heroes is ubiquitous.

Or we might study the professions. Physicians line up on

the stage as quacks, charlatans, conscious impostors. Lawyers are pictured as men whose sole purpose is to hide ignorance and knavery in a cloud of words, and to empty the pockets of their clients in a trumped-up pursuit of justice.

The Church does not escape. The Puritan who in Restoration drama was represented as a psalm-singing, whining, long-faced hypocrite, concealing a vicious life under a pretense of rigid sanctity, was replaced as a comic type in the early eighteenth century by the non-juror, and when later Wesley's tabernacle and Foote's play-house were competing for popular favor, it was the Methodist who obtained the bright reversion, there being ascribed to him all the cant and hypocrisy of his forbears.

Society is likewise represented in all its follies and vices. Of genuine social importance is a study of the long line of "fops," "coxcombs," "pretty fellows," "beaux," "macaronies," "dudes," as they were variously called, from "Sir Solomon, the Cautious Coxcomb," in 1669, through "Sir Fopling Flutter," "Sir Courtly Nice," "Sir Novelty Fashion," "Lord Foppington," "Sir William Mode," "Mr. Apeall," "Sir Brilliant Fashion," "Lord Trinket," "Brisk," "Flutter," "Sparkish," and the rest of the inane tribe, with their laces and frills, their powdered wigs, their enameled snuff-boxes, their ivory combs and pocket-mirrors, their muffs and canes, their inordinate vanity, affectation, and empty-headedness.

Learning, too, found its place on the stage. From the establishment of the Royal Society in 1662, the work of the Gresham professors was the theme of unbridled ridicule. The virtuoso who spent his whole time with a telescope investigating the geography of the moon or with a microscope determining the nature of the bloom on a plum; the anatomist, the geologist, the antiquarian, were counted fair game for the satirist.

I. The Learned Lady as a Comic Type

In this multifarious activity of the comic spirit it would be strange if any pretense to learning on the part of women should

escape. And we are, in fact, presented with a motley procession of mock Minervas. Even as early as Jonson there was some recognition of the comic potentialities of the learned lady as a type. In *Epicœne* (1609) Morose is warned against matrimony by Truewit who recounts the ways in which a learned wife could shatter his peace. Proud to show her Latin and Greek, she might talk all day like a parrot; or, cunning in controversy, she might attack the very knots of divinity; or, considering herself a critic, she might "censure *poets*, and authors, and stiles, and compare 'hem, DANIEL with SPENSER, IONSON with tother youth, and so foorth." [1] But this summary seems to be less a reflection of contemporary life than an echo from Juvenal's Sixth Satire.[2] More bitterly satirical is Jonson's representation of the "Collegiate Ladies," "an order between courtiers and country madams, that live from their husbands." But these ladies make no pretense to learning. Lady Haughty and her coadjutors are frivolous, affected, profligate women whose "college-grammar" and "college-honours" [3] have no significance beyond the amorous intrigue for which their order was founded. The play reads as if there had been some contemporary organization at which Jonson's satire was directed, but no record of such an organization is extant. At any rate, the satire was against women who considered themselves emancipated

[1] *Epicœne, or, The Silent Woman*, Act II, Sc. 2, ll. 117–20.

[2] Juvenal: Satire VI, 434–40. "That woman is a worse nuisance than usual who, as soon as she reclines on her couch, praises Virgil; makes excuses for doomed Dido; pits bards against one another and compares them, and weighs Homer and Mars in the balance."

[3] The word "college" was loosely used in the seventeenth century as signifying any company or collective body. Burton, in *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), says, "They have whole colleges of Curtezans in their Towns and Cities." Randolph, in *The Muse's Looking-Glass* (1638), calls play-houses "colleges of transgression," and speaks of "Black-Friar's College." Jonson, in *Staple of News*, says "a canter's college is proposed." Dryden even speaks of a "college of bees" (*Flower and Leaf*), and Amory, in *John Buncle*, uses the same phrase more than half a century later. It becomes evident, then, that the words "college" and "collegiate" might be used without any thought of an organization founded for purposes of learning. (See Jonson: *Epicœne*, Ed. Henry, Aurelia, p. 138.)

from conjugal life, rather than against learned women as such. In *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) Jonson brings into some prominence "a Lady Projectress" who is said to deserve the gratitude of the commonwealth of ladies for her great undertakings in their behalf. But her solid service is in the realm of Spanish fashions and new cosmetics.

Jasper Mayne, in *The City Match* (1639), has a fling at the "new foundation" and "the philosophical Madams" in a manner even more contemptuous than that of Jonson. He also presents a Mrs. Scruple, a Puritan school-mistress learned in religious lore, who can expound the Scriptures, who "works Hebrew samplers and teaches to knit in Chaldee." Her pupil Dorcas makes "religious petticoats," substituting church histories for flowers, and sanctifying cushionets and smock-sleeves with holy embroideries. But it seems to be the religious zeal that is here satirized, with only an incidental reflection on the learning implied in a knowledge of Hebrew and Chaldee.

These remote hints did not result in the establishment of a stage type. It was through Molière that the learned lady took her place in English comedy. The immediate object of Molière's attack was the coterie of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, a salon established about 1615. The avowed purposes of this exclusive literary circle were to rid the French tongue of impurities, to cultivate *le beau* and *le vrai bel amour* and *bel conversation*. They had a vocabulary peculiar to themselves, and they devulgarized French by calling common things by uncommon names. They improvised stories and rhymes, played literary games, called themselves by *noms de Parnasse*, and held exalted views on friendship, love, and marriage, which they endlessly discussed. In the time of its greatest power some of the most noted men and women of France belonged to this salon, but gradually pedantry and affectation had crept in, and the extravagances of the later *Précieux* and *Précieuses* in thought, speech, and manners awakened the ridicule of Molière. In his Preface to *Les Précieuses* (1659) he protested that the true

Précieuses could not rightly be vexed at a satire meant only for those absurd people who wretchedly imitated them. But it is nevertheless apparent that his play was an attack on the whole assembly of learned or pseudo-learned ladies and gentlemen who made up the salon, with particular attention to the ladies. In this play he satirized especially *bel amour*, poetic improvisation, and fine language.

Thirteen years later he returned to the general subject in a more elaborate play, *Les Femmes Savantes* (1672), where, in the characters of Armande, Bélise, and Philaminte, he represented the false delicacy of the learned ladies, the absurdities of their struggle for pure diction, their puerile literary enthusiasms, their affected interest in science and philosophy, their neglect of all the ordinary duties of life, and the essential hypocrisy of their professedly platonic attitude towards husbands and lovers.

Molière's plays were well known to the earliest English playwrights of the Restoration.[1] Etherege had seen *Les Précieuses*[2] on the French stage, and the impression it had made upon him was evidenced by his Sir Fopling Flutter, a brilliant English version of Molière's Mascarille, but Etherege nowhere takes up the ideas represented by Madelon and Cathos. Wycherley had personally known the circle of the Hôtel de Rambouillet during his stay in France from 1655 to 1660,[3] and he could not have failed to know of the sensation created by Molière's attack on the noted salon. And throughout his work he was profoundly influenced by Molière in his general conception of true comic material and methods. But apparently the learned-lady theme did not appeal to him as especially suitable for English treatment. Or possibly the very fact of his close association with some of the most brilliant members of the salon made him averse to a satiric representation even of their absurdities.

The first comedy to show any direct influence of Madelon

[1] Miles, Dudley: *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, chap. III.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 62. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

and Cathos is Dryden's *Mock Astrologer* (1668).[1] Donna Aurelia is like her ancestors in *Les Précieuses* in her attempts at fine language. She is unable "to speak ten words without some affected phrase that is in fashion." In direct imitation of the French damsels she calls her looking-glass "the counsellor of the graces," and urges upon her maid fashionable language and pronunciation. In her effort to secure striking phraseology she does not rise above the constant use of "furious." She has a "furious inclination" for the occult sciences, a "furious tender" for Don Melchor, and a ghost is a "furiously furious" appearance. Her indigence of epithets puts her far behind Molière's nimble-tongued young ladies, but she certainly strives to be in the same class.

The influence of Molière became more apparent after the presentation of *Les Femmes Savantes* in 1672. In Dryden's *Marriage à la Mode* (1672) is a really vital and entertaining picture of a lady with a literary fad. Melantha is one of the sprightliest and most convincing of the comedy heroines before Congreve's Millamant. Melantha is a Sicilian town lady, young, fair, and rich; a finished coquette, an inveterate news-monger, a hanger-on of the court. She would, she says, rather be "*mal traitée* at court than deified in the town." She accordingly overdoes what she considers to be court characteristics. Especially does she ape the French. French dances and clothes, French plays and ballets, French words, all that's writ in France, fill her with rapture. Her lover does not win her by his face or fortune, but by his rapid fire of French terms. Melantha belongs to the cult of the *précieuses* in her joy over fine language. An Indian gown, a gimp petticoat, a new point

[1] There are two other indications of the early influence of *Les Précieuses*. Flecknoe published in 1667 an unacted play entitled *Damoiselles à la mode*, a sort of mosaic made up from four plays of which *Les Précieuses* was one. September 15, 1668, Pepys wrote: "To the King's play-house, to see a new play, acted but yesterday, a translation out of French by Dryden, called 'The Lady's à la Mode': so mean a thing as when they came to say it would be acted again to-morrow, both he that said it, Beeson, and the pit fell a-laughing, there being this day not a quarter of the pit full." Pepys is the only authority for attributing the piece to Dryden.

gorget, are tossed to her maid Philatio as a reward for any new words she may bring in. Melantha counts it an ignominy to use vulgar, threadbare words that are fit for nothing but to be thrown to peasants. She practices her vocabulary with her glances at the mirror, and makes up effective sentences into which she may run new acquisitions such as *naïveté*, *sottises*, *embarrass*, and is most unhappy when they prove recalcitrant and are lost in the rapid interplay of talk.

Melantha is an admirable example of social satire, a delightfully audacious representation of a contemporary folly. France was the recognized home of culture and good-breeding. No courtier or fashionable lady could be counted as having the last word in refinement who had not spent some time on French soil, and the French language was one of the most important studies of the higher classes in England. What was taken for granted in court circles became, of course, the *ne plus ultra* of the ambitious town lady. But her hastily acquired and imperfect knowledge would lead to mistakes and over-emphasis, the result being a character of genuinely comic import. For the stage interpretation of Melantha actresses doubtless had many a social model among the town ladies with violent court aspirations. Cibber says that Melantha was "as finish'd an Impertinent as ever flutter'd in a Drawing-Room," and that she contained "the most compleat System of Female Foppery that could possibly be crowded into the tortured Form of a Fine Lady." And chief among her fopperies was her preciosity, a characteristic marked in most of the learned ladies represented in seventeenth and eighteenth century comedy.

Mrs. Behn's *Sir Patient Fancy* came out late in 1678 and was based for its chief intrigue on Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire* which had appeared in 1673. But the character of Lady Knowell, "an affected learned woman," reverted to *Les Femmes Savantes*. She is the young stepmother of Lord Knowell's marriageable son and daughter and is of considerable importance in the general movement of the play, but her real function is to present a caricature of a learned lady. She understands Greek,

Latin, and Italian. She cannot endure "divine Homer" in a translation: "*Ton d'apamibominous prosiphe podas ochus Achilleus!* Ah how it sounds! which English't dwindles into the most grating stuff: — Then the swift-footed *Achilles* made reply." As she looks upon the frivolous young girls of the play she exclaims: "I'm for the substantial pleasure of an Author. *Philosophemur!* is my Motto. . . . Oh the delight of Books! When I was their age I always employed my looser Hours in reading — if serious, 't was *Tacitus, Seneca, Plutarch's Morals,* or some such useful Author; or in an Humour gay, I was for Poetry, *Virgil, Homer,* or *Tasso.*"

To this emphasis on the classics is added a preciosity which consists of misdirected attempts to use impressive language. Lady Knowell is an early and not very amusing Mrs. Malaprop. Her "hard words" are sometimes legitimate words to which she attaches a wrong meaning, as in the sentence, "There is much Volubility in Human Affairs," when she means "variability." But most of her words are compounded of portions of others each one of which contains some shade of her meaning; as, "Were I querimonious [querulous, acrimonious] I should resent the affront"; "Notwithstanding your Exprobations [expostulations, disapprobations]"; and "I saw your Reclination [revolt, declination] from my Addresses." These bungling attempts to play with language are too far-sought, too puzzling, to bring instant laughter, but they suffice to establish Lady Knowell as at least a would-be precursor of Mrs. Malaprop a century later.

The young ladies make sport of Lady Knowell. Lucretia does not approve of her learning. "Methinks," she says, "to be read in the Arts, as they call 'em, is the peculiar Province of the other Sex." Isabella is of much the same opinion, yet she feels that women might easily surpass most University men: "Indeed the Men . . . boast their Learning and Languages; but if they can find any one of our Sex fuller of Words, and to so little Purpose as some of their Gownmen, I'll be content to change my Petticoats for Pantaloons and go to a Grammar-school."

In Shadwell's *Sullen Lovers* (1669) is a Lady Vaine who calls herself a "Virtuosa" and is learned in medicaments. She boasts of her serviceableness with her "*Flos Unguentorum, Paracelsian,* and *Green-salve,*" and praises the *Album Grecum* as a salve of her own concoction.

Of much more interest is Shadwell's *Bury-Fair* (1689). The chief characters are Lady Fantast, Mrs. Fantast, and Lady Fantast's stepdaughter, Gertrude Oldwit, and their attendant cavaliers. The central action, the joke played on the Fantast ladies in imposing on them a barber dressed up to impersonate a French count, is taken from *Les Précieuses.* But Lady Fantast and her daughter have their direct ancestry in Philaminte and Armande in *Les Femmes Savantes.* Wildish who had at first loved Mrs. Fantast, but, on finding her a *précieuse,* had transferred his affections to Gertrude, is Molière's Clitandre, while Gertrude herself and Mr. Oldwit are the Henriette and Chrysale of the French play. The common sense of the play is embodied in Wildish, Gertrude, and Mr. Oldwit. Lady Fantast is not herself especially learned, but all her ambitions in that line have been concentrated on her daughter. "I have bred my daughter a linguist," she proudly exclaims when the young lady quotes Latin. The two ladies converse as follows:

Mrs. Fan. To all that, which the World calls Wit and Breeding, I have always had a natural Tendency, a *penchen,* deriv'd, as the Learned say, *Ex traduce,* from your Ladyship: Besides the great Prevalence of your Ladyship's most shining Example has perpetually Stimulated me, to the Sacrificing all my Endeavours towards the attaining of those inestimable Jewels; than which, nothing in the Universe can be so much a *mon gre,* as the *French* say. And for Beauty, Madam, the Stock I am enrich'd with, comes by emanation from your Ladyship; who has been long held a Paragon of Perfection; Most *Charmant,* most *Tuant.*

L. Fan. Ah, my dear Child: I! Alas, Alas! Time has been, and yet I am not quite gone; but thou hast those Attractions, which I bewail the want of: Poetry, Latin, and the French tongue.

Mrs. Fan. I must confess, I have ever had a Tendress for the Muses, and have a due Reverence for *Helicon,* and *Parnassus,* and the Graces:

But Heroick Numbers upon Love and Honour are most Ravissant, most Suprenant; and a Tragedy is so Touchant! I dye at a Tragedy; I'll swear, I do.

Lady Fantast has an adoration of French equal to that of Melantha. "No Conversation," she says, "can be refin'd and well-drest without French to lard it." The false count wins his way with the ladies when he professes to believe them French:

Count. Me vil gage a hundred Pistol, dat dat fine Ladeè and her ver pretty Sister, are de French Ladeè.

L. Fan. We have often bewailed the not having had the honour to be born French.

Count. Pardon me, is impossible.

Mrs. Fan. Monfoy, je parle vray! we are meer English *assurement.*

Count. Mon foy, je parle vray! vat is dat Gibberish? Oh, lettè me see; de Fader is de Lawyere, an she learne of him at de Temple: is de Law French. I am amazè! French Lookè, French Ayre, French Mien, French Movement of de Bodee! Morbleu. Monsieur, I vil gage 4,500 Pistol, dat dese two Sister vere bred in *France,* yes. Teste bleau, I can no be deceive.

Mrs. Fan. Jee vous en prie, do not; we never had the blessing to be in *France;* you do us too much Honour. Alas, we are forc'd to be content with plain *English* Breeding: you will bring all my blood into a blush. I had indeed a *penchen* always to French.

The barber-count makes fun of the French of the ladies Fantast, but in one of the conversations the joke is turned the other way, for Mrs. Fantast's learning very nearly proves fatal to the count:

Mrs. Fan. You know very well what the Poet says:

Res est Solliciti plena timoris amor.

Count. Ver well, Madam, you be de most profound Ladee, and de great Scholar. — [*Aside.*] Morbleu, she vill findé me out! Begar, I can no read.

Mrs. Fan. No, no assurement, pretty well read in the Classic Authors. Or so. Monsieur *Scudery* says very well:

L'amour est une grande chose.

Count. Hee bee ver pretty Poet too. — Begar she will puzzle me.

Mrs. Fan. Poet, Monsieur! he writ Romances.

Count. Ah, Madam, in France we callè de Romance, de Posie.

Mrs. Fan. And as Monsieur *Balzac* says, *Songez un peu.*

Count. Dat *Balzac* write de very good Romance.
Mrs. Fan. Indeed! I never heard that.
Count. Je vous assure. — A pox on her reading!

Gertrude is the foil to Mrs. Fantast and she sees no necessity for the punctilious breeding of the ladies Fantast. "Breeding! I know no Breeding necessary, but Discretion to distinguish Company and Occasions; and Common Sense, to entertain Persons according to their Ranks; besides making a Curt'sie not awkwardly, and walking with one's Toes out."

To so low-bred a view of manners Mrs. Fantast can only exclaim, "*Ars non habet Inimicum præter Ignorantem*"; but Gertrude responds: "A Lady may look after the Affairs of a Family, the Demeanor of her Servants, take care of her Nursery, take all her Accounts every Week, obey her husband, and discharge all the Offices of a good Wife, with her Native Tongue; and this is all I desire to arrive at."

The two ladies are especially obnoxious to Mr. Oldwit, who exhausts a Billingsgate vocabulary in his irritation at their follies. He sums up his misery in the exclamation, "He that would have the Devil more damn'd, let him get him to marry a She-Wit!"

Mr. Thomas Wright's *The Female Vertuosos* (1693) is confessedly drawn from "the great Original of French Comedy." Ten of the characters and most of the situations are plainly modeled on *Les Femmes Savantes*, but the name of the play and the idea of ridiculing the new science may have been suggested by Shadwell's *The Vertuoso*, a popular attack on the Royal Society. Wright gains a trace of originality by transferring his chief learned ladies from the realm of word-mongery to that of pseudo-science. The tone of the play is indicated by the prefixed quotation from Dryden's translation of Juvenal's Sixth Satire: [1]

[1] It is interesting to note that the dedication is to Charles, Earl of Winchilsea, whose aunt, Mrs. Finch, one of the *literati*, was at that time living with the young Earl, at Eastwell, and had even then a vast folio of verse and prose with which the family circle was occasionally regaled. She would hardly enjoy this choice of her nephew as public patron of Wright's caricature of female wits.

> Oh what a Midnight Curse has he, whose Side
> Is pester'd with a Mood and Figure Bride!
> Let mine, ye Gods! if such must be my Fate,
> No Logic learn, nor History translate,
> But rather be a quiet, humble Fool:
> I hate a Wife to whom I go to School.

The three "Vertuosos" are Lady Meanwell, Mrs. Lovewit, and Catchat. Mrs. Lovewit has been making laboratory experiments in behalf of the *literati*. She has collected all the plays that ever came out and is planning to put them in a limbeck and extract all the quintessence of wit that is in them to sell by drops to the poets of the age. Mrs. Meanwell has just made the great discovery that rain comes from clouds. With a housewifely objection to the wet streets of London and a corresponding sense of civic responsibility, she has invented a way of keeping the streets as dry and clean as a drawing-room the year round. She has just been to the Lord Mayor to propose her scheme, which is to erect a series of posts similar to the lamp-posts newly set up in London, equip them with great bellows, and have city watchmen to blow the clouds away. Catchat is interested in astronomy. Through a telescope she has seen men in the moon and been almost embarrassed by the loving looks cast upon her by the amorous sparks of that shining world.

While science is the main interest in this play, the other accepted traits of the learned woman are not neglected. Catchat, for instance, has been nurtured on the *Grand Cyrus* and theoretically accepts its cold guidance in matters of love. But her platonic ideals fade before her desires, and she becomes the most impassioned husband-hunter of the throng. Literary criticism is not omitted. Mr. Maggot Jingle's poem "To the Countess of *Squeezingham* upon her AGUE" gains rapturous praise from the ladies. The maid Lucy is about to be discharged for having committed "the horrid, scandalous, and exorbitant Offence" of saying that "Cowley, the wretched Cowley, was as good a poet as the incomparable Sir Maggot Jingle."

The domestic infelicity of Lord and Lady Meanwell is described as a result of the lady's learning. Lord Meanwell says of her, "My wife is a terrible Dragon when she is out of Humour; she makes indeed a High Boast of her Philosophy but she is not a bit the less Cholerick for it, and her Morals that teach her to look upon all Things with an indifferent Eye have not the least Influence on her Passions." Lady Meanwell is a virago before whose hard words her husband shrinks into cowed submission.

As an outcome of their combined wits these ladies are about to open an "Academy of *Beaux Esprits*," where they may communicate to each other such discoveries as they make, and which shall serve as an "Apollo's Levee" to the Sapphos of the Age, and as a Sovereign Tribunal for all new books.

Congreve's contribution to the learned lady in comedy comes in *The Double Dealer* (1694), in the admirable figure of Lady Froth, "a coquet pretender to poetry, wit, and learning." Her pet affectation is that of an extravagant passion for her husband, Lord Froth, the solemn coxcomb of the play, and her affections have been bound up with her literary aspirations even from the days of their courtship. She had known love and sleepless nights and whimsies and vapors, but she had also known how to give them vent.

Cynthia. How pray, Madam?

Lady Froth. O I writ, writ abundantly; — do you never write?

Cynthia. Write what?

Lady Froth. Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyrics, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

By virtue of her learning and her lord's title Lady Froth assumes superiority over Cynthia, the modest, sensible heroine.

Lady Froth. My Lord Froth is as fine a gentleman and as much a man of quality! Ah, nothing at all of the common air! . . . I think I may say he wants nothing but a blue ribbon and a star to make him shine, the very phosphorus of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? . . . Being derived from the Greek I thought you might have escaped the etymology.

Her ladyship is also an author and has written an heroic poem on her connubial bliss. She communicates this fact to Brisk, the foolish critic.

Lady Froth. Did my lord tell you? yes, I vow, and the subject is my lord's love to me. And what do you think I call it? I dare swear you won't guess — 'The Syllabub'; ha! ha! ha!

Brisk. Because my lord's title's Froth, egad; ha! ha! ha! deuce take me, very *à propos* and surprising, ha! ha! ha!

Lady Froth. He! ay, is not it? — And then I call my lord Spumoso, and myself — what d' ye think I call myself?

Brisk. Lactilla, maybe; — 'gad I can not tell.

Lady Froth. Biddy, that's all, just my own name.

Lady Froth was certainly not without a competent critical apparatus for writing poetry since she declares herself familiar with Bossu, Rapin, Dacier upon Aristotle, and Horace. The wittiest portion of the play is based on Molière's scene where the lady critics praise the foolish poet. In Congreve the foolish poet is a woman and the critic a man, but the comic situation is essentially the same.

Lady Froth. Then you think that episode between Susan, the dairy-maid, and our coachman, is not amiss; you know I may suppose the dairy in town as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish! — But then being an heroic poem, had not you better call him a charioteer? charioteer sounds great; besides, your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun; and you know the sun is called Heaven's charioteer.

Lady Froth. Oh, infinitely better! I am extremely beholden to you for the hint; stay, we'll read over those half a score lines again. (*Pulls out a paper.*) Let me see here, you know what goes before, — the comparison, you know. (*Reads.*)

> For as the sun shines every day,
> So, of our coachman I may say —

Brisk. I'm afraid that simile won't do in wet weather; because you say the sun shines every day.

Lady Froth. No, for the sun it won't, but it will do for the coachman; for you know there's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right, that saves all.

Lady Froth. Then, I don't say the sun shines all the day, but that

he peeps now and then; yet he does shine all the day too, you know, though we don't see him.

Brisk. Right, but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady Froth. Well, you shall hear — Let me see. (*Reads.*)

For as the sun shines every day,
So, of our coachman I may say,
He shows his drunken fiery face,
Just as the sun does more or less.

Brisk. That's right, all's well, all's well — "More or less."

Lady Froth. (*Reads.*)

And when at night his labour 's done,
Then too, like Heaven's charioteer the sun.

Ay, charioteer does better.

Into the dairy he descends,
And there his whipping and his driving ends;
There he's secure from danger of a bilk,
His fare is paid him, and he sets in milk.

For Susan, you know, is Thetis, and so —

Brisk. Incomparably well and proper, egad! — But I have one exception to make; — don't you think bilk (I know it's good rhyme), but don't you think "bilk" and "fare" too like a hackney-coachman?

Lady Froth. I swear and vow, I am afraid so — And yet our Jehu was a hackney-coachman when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I'm answered, if Jehu was a hackney-coachman. — You may put that in the marginal notes though, to prevent criticism, and say, "Jehu was formerly a hackney-coachman."

Lady Froth. I will; you'd oblige me extremely to write notes on the whole poem.

In 1697 there appeared a play by "W. M." entitled *Female Wits*. Up to this time the character of the learned lady had been general in type and based pretty closely on Molière, but with *Female Wits* the satire became personal. The point of the play was that the three "wits" should be recognized as representing specific ladies. Calista was Catherine Cockburn, a beautiful young girl who at seventeen had had the misfortune to have a tragedy brought out at the Theater Royal.[1] She was treated rather gently, being merely bantered for pretending to understand Latin and Greek. On being asked if she had read

[1] See p. 106.

Cicero's *Oration* she answered, "I know it so well as to have turned it into Latin." Marsilia was Mrs. Manley, two of whose tragedies, *The Royal Mischief* and *The Lost Lover*, had appeared the preceding year.[1] She is represented as having a play in rehearsal. In the meantime she has a new project on the stocks. She is going to show the superiority of the moderns to the ancients by a revision of "Catiline's Conspiracy." The first speech is to remain as it is in the original, while the others, rewritten with all the ornaments of modern rhetoric, will show up, by contrast, the poverty of the Latin style. The sample she gives of her new version was undoubtedly a fling at heroic tragedy. Her address to Rome begins: "Thy fated Stones, and thy cemented Walls, this Arm shall scatter into Atoms. Then on thy Ruins will I mount! Mount, my aspiring Spirit, mount! Hit yon azure Roof and justle Gods!" Mrs. Wellfed, "a fat female author," was at once known to stand for Mrs. Pix,[2] a writer of intolerable tragedies and poor comedies, and noted for her love of good living. Except for the personal reference this play offers little that can be of interest.

Vanbrugh's *Æsop* (1699) is a play adapted from Boursault. Æsop is the sage to whom successive people bring their problems. To each one he gives a solution in a verse fable. Hortensia, the heroine of one of these episodes, is described by her maid as "the wise Lady, the great scholar, that nobody can understand." She loves "Words of Erudition," and waxes eloquent on philosophical abstractions. There is something in her nature that soars too high for the vulgar, but she hopes to find in Æsop a kindred soul because, as she says, "His Intellects are categorical." But Æsop scorns her fine language. "Now by my Faith, Lady," he answers, "I don't know what *Intellect* is; and methinks *categorical* sounds as if you call'd me Names. Pray speak that you may be understood; Language was designed for it, indeed it was."

When Hortensia's lover asks Æsop's advice as to the best way to manage a "Philosopheress," the wise man advises re-

[1] See p. 208. [2] See p. 132.

treat while there is yet time. The little apologue of "The Linnet and the Nightingale" embodies his views and is the most trenchant expression so far come upon of the supposed permanent opposition between learning and the eternal feminine:

Once on a time, a Nightingale
To Changes prone;
Unconstant, fickle, whimsical,
(A Female one)
Who sung like others of her kind,
Hearing a well-taught Linnet's Airs,
Had other matters in her mind,
To imitate him she prepares.
Her Fancy strait was on the Wing:
I fly, quoth she,
As well as he;
I don't know why
I should not try
As well as he to sing.
From that day forth she chang'd her Throat:
She did, as learned Women do,
Till every thing
That heard her sing
Wou'd run away from her — as I from you.

In Charles Gildon's *Comparison between the Two Stages* (1702) we have a discussion by two gentlemen, Rambler and Sullen, and a critic, Chagrin, as to the comparative merits of Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. The most important reference to women playwrights is in the following passage:

Rambler. Proceed to the next.
Sullen. "The Lost Lover, or, The Jealous Husband."
Rambler. I never heard of that.
Sullen. Oh this is a Lady's!
Crit. How's that? — Audetg; viris contendere virgo?
Rambler. See how Critick starts at the naming a lady.
Crit. What occasion had you to name a Lady in the confounded work you're about?
Sullen. Here's a Play of hers.
Crit. The Devil there is. I wonder in my heart we are so lost to all

Sense and reason: What a Pox have the Women to do with the Muses? I grant you the Poets call the Nine Muses by the names of Women, but why so? not because the Sex had anything to do with Poetry, but because in that Sex they're fitter for Prostitution.

Rambler. Abusive, now you're abusive Mr. Critick.

Crit. Sir I tell you we are abus'd: I hate these Petticoat-Authors; 't is false Grammar, there's no Feminine for the Latin word, 't is entirely of the Masculine Gender, and the Language won't bear such a thing as a she-Author.

Sullen. Come, come, you forget your self; you know 't was a Lady carry'd the Prize of Poetry in France t'other day; and I assure you, if the Account were fairly stated, there have been in England some of that Sex who have done admirably.

Crit. I'le hear no more on 't: Come Sir, drink about.

Rambler. To the Fair Author of The Fatal Friendship.

Crit. Ay, come; away with it, anything that the Glass may go round. . . .

In Farquhar's *The Inconstant* (1703) one lady, named "Bisarre" because of her odd, capricious ways, illustrates Pope's "Most women have no character at all," so briskly does she change from "a starch'd piece of Austerity" to a pert madcap. As a prude she takes rank among the learned ladies. She has a grave, reverend air, and is dubbed "a Plato in Petticoats." She wins the affections of Captain Duretete — a man socially hampered by a University education — when she talks to him in his own language. "The Forms that Logicians introduce," she begins in pedantic tone, "and which proceed from simple Enumeration, are dubitable." Duretete interrupts in an ecstasy, "She's mine, Man; she's mine: My own Talent to a T. I'll match her in Dialectics, faith. I was seven Years at the University, Man, nurs'd up with *Barbara, Celarunt, Darii, Ferio, Baralipton.* Did you know that 't was Metaphysics made me an Ass?" Bisarre is the only heroine whose learning wins her a husband.

In Mrs. Centlivre's *The Basset Table* (1705) the charming young Valeria has a lover whom she intends to marry, but she is too much occupied with scientific research to have any time for darts and flames and lover's sighs. Fortunately Ensign

cares so much for Valeria and her ducats that he is able to endure the tediousness of courtship in which laboratory experiments supersede passion.

Ensign. 'T is true, that little She Philosopher has made me do Penance more heartily than ever my Sins did; I deserve her by mere dint of Patience. I have stood whole Hours to hear her assert, that Fire cannot burn, nor Water drown, nor Pain afflict, and Forty ridiculous Systems . . .

Sir Jam. And all her Experiments on Frogs, Fish, and Flies, ha, ha, without the least contradiction.

Ensign. Contradiction, no, no, I allow'd all she said, with, undoubtedly, Madam, — I am of your Mind, Madam, it must be so — Natural Causes, &c.

Sir Jam. Ha, ha, ha, I think it is a supernatural Cause, which enables thee to go thro' this Fatigue; if it were not to raise thy Fortune, I should think thee mad to pursue her.

He cannot edge in a word of love so absorbed does she declare herself to be in observing the circulation of blood in a fish's tail. Valeria is quite ahead of her time in her passion for dissection. She has devoted her pretty dove to the cause of research, and offers her jewels in return for her cousin's fine Italian greyhound, likewise to be used in her pursuit of anatomical secrets. When accused of cruelty she exclaims in quite a modern tone, "Can Animals, Insects, or Reptiles be put to a nobler use than to increase our Knowledge?" She loses her sailor lover by breaking in upon his sea lingo with a request that he should speak, "properly, positively, laconically, and naturally" and by deluging him with questions about mermaids and the inhabitants of the stars. He quickly determines that he does n't regard a "Philosophical Gimcrack the value of a cockle-shell," and considers the lovely young Valeria as "fitter for Moorfields than Matrimony." She turns away from him with a sigh at the time wasted on a being so irrational as a suitor, and devotes herself again to the "immense Pleasures of dear, dear Philosophy."

Lady Reveller and her woman, Alphiew, sharply criticize Valeria for her unfeminine occupations.

Lady. Will you ever be weary of these Whimsies?

Val. Whimsies! Natural Philosophy a Whimsy! Oh! the unlearned World.

Lady. Ridiculous Learning!

Alp. Ridiculous, indeed, for Women; Philosophy suits our Sex as Jack Boots would do.

Val. Custom would bring them as much in Fashion as Furbeloes, and Practice would make us as valiant as e'er a Hero of them all; the Resolution is in the Mind — Nothing can enslave that.

Lady. My Stars! this Girl will be mad, that's certain.

Val. Mad! so Nero banish'd Philosophers from Rome, and the first Discoverer of the Antipodes was condemn'd for a Heretic.

Lady. In my Conscience, Alphiew, this pretty Creature's spoil'd. Well, Cousin, might I advise, you should bestow your Fortune in founding a College for the Study of philosophy, where none but Women should be admitted; and to immortalize your Name, they should be called Valerians, ha, ha, ha.

Val. What you make a jest of, I'd execute were Fortune in my Power.

The heroine of Charles Johnson's *The Generous Husband* (1711), Florida, is described as a "Pretender to Learning, a Philosophress." She is young, beautiful and with a tolerable dower. But she is invincibly opposed to marriage. She gives caustic analyses of the lawyer, the courtier, the soldier, the country squire, proposed by her father with matrimonial intent. "I'll not be married," she says, "I'll not submit myself to the uneven Temper of a Humourist; I'll neither be a Prop to a Fool's Fortune, nor a Bar to a Libertine's Pleasure." "I hate Men, I hate the Cumber of a Family, everything concurs to discourage me, to make me fear it, to make it my Aversion. Study has nothing in it but what is serene and calm." When her father urges the loss of her inheritance if she does not marry, her unmoved answer is, "I shall have still a good Book — which I am persuaded I shall love much better than a bad Husband — I'll tell you, Sir, for these three Years that I have been acquainted with Aristotle, we have not had the least difference together." Various lovers present themselves. One of them says he trembles whenever he visits her because she puts

him so in mind of his schoolmaster, but he determines to stand "a little Ear-bating before Marriage" — encouraged thereto by the lady's money — with the hope of devising effective restraints after marriage. Another bold lover ventures upon her in her study where she sits surrounded by books and mathematical instruments. He is disguised as a traveling *Japanese* philosopher, and she enters upon the conversation with a learned salutation — *Vir Colendissime si tu illorum Eruditorum*, but he begs her in the name of Dr. Bentley not to repudiate her "vernacular Idiom," and the interview proceeds in the English tongue. All goes prosperously until the pseudo-philosopher speaks of love. She dismisses him with "What a terrible Solecism in good Manners has this Fellow committed — *Nunquam minus solus quam cum solus;* excellent *Scipio* — I admire that thought." She yields to love only when the learned Mr. Dypthong, who has "corrected every Nod in Homer," appears as a suitor. He has just escaped from the "*Gothic* Persecution of a sort of *Animalcula* call'd Punsters" and comes to her as an Oracle of Reason. This is the right approach and his victory is assured when he praises her noble easy *Odes* that Horace would not blush to own, her immortal Sonnet on *Cato*, her mastery of "both the Ethos and the Pathos." She pays him in kind with honeyed compliments from the Muses and the Graces. They discuss the Cartesian system, and the Epicurean, the Peripatetic and the Platonic Schools of Thought. The inhabitants of the moon come in for passing notice. The soul and the mind receive analysis. This sort of courtship suits her. 'T is thus a "Philosophress" should be wooed. She balks a little at the marriage articles, praying Mr. Grub to alter the savage style of them into something more genteel, at least in so far as to let the dates be "Calendar and Ides"; the pounds and pence, "Sesterces and Talents." But she yields the point on making the unhappy discovery that to be learned and polite in dower articles would be illegal, that the law demands tautology, verbiage, an impertinent jargon. It is only when Mr. Dypthong is unmasked a villain that Florida becomes "sick of Letters," lays

aside the "Severity of Thought" along with her big folios, and accepts the paternal choice in the way of a husband. Her father, whose slightest remarks have received pitiless logical analysis from his daughter, who is urged to maintain silence or to speak "positively — laconically — naturally," whose arguments are met with classic quotations that are but as gibberish to his uninstructed ear, hands her over to a husband with a sigh of relief. His conclusion is, "Wit in a Woman is like Mettle in a blind Mare." The lover agrees that "a She-Understanding shou'd always be passive." Learning, he says, may give a woman more Sail, but she 's sure to lack Ballast!

In January, 1717, there appeared a farce at Drury Lane entitled *Three Hours after Marriage*. It was the joint work of Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot, but the character of the learned lady, Phœbe Clinket,[1] was by Pope. Phœbe is not an important person in the plot. She was evidently drawn merely to caricature a learned lady, in this case an authoress. She comes upon the stage in an ink-stained dress with pens stuck in her hair. Her maid carries strapped to her back a desk on which Phœbe writes:

Maid. I had as good carry a raree-show about the street. Oh! how my back akes!

Clink. What are the labors of the back to those of the brain? Thou scandal to the muses, I have now lost a thought worth a folio, by thy impertinence.[2]

Maid. Have I not got a crick in my back already, that will make me good for nothing, with lifting your great books?

Clink. Folio's, call them, and not great books, thou monster of impropriety. But have patience, and I will remember the three gallery-tickets I promis'd thee at my new Tragedy.

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[1] See Winchilsea, Lady: *Works* (edited by Myra Reynolds), Introduction, pp. lxii-lxx, for full account of this character.

[2] This scene may refer both to Lady Winchilsea and the Duchess of Newcastle. Cibber, in his *Lives of the Poets*, vol. II, p. 164, says: "The Duchess kept a great many young ladies about her person, who occasionally wrote what she dictated. Some of them slept in a room contiguous to that in which her Grace lay, and ever ready, at the call of her bell to rise any hour of the night, to write down her conceptions, lest they should escape her memory."

Maid. I shall never get my head-cloathes clear-starch'd at this rate.

Clink. Thou destroyer of learning, thou worse than a book-worm! Thou hast put me beyond all patience. Remember how my lyric ode bound about a tallow-candle; thy wrapping up snuff in an epigram; nay, the unworthy usage of my Hymn to *Apollo*, filthy creature! read me the last lines I wrote upon the *Deluge*, and take care to pronounce them as I taught you.

Maid. (*Reads with an affected tone.*)

Swell'd with a dropsy, sickly Nature lies,
And melting in a diabetes, dies.

Clink. Still without Cadence!

Maid.

Swell'd with a dropsy —

Clink. Hold. I conceive . . .

The roaring seas o'er the tall woods have broke,
And whales now perch upon the sturdy oak.

Roaring? Stay. Rumbling, roaring, rustling. No; raging seas. (*Writing.*)

The raging seas o'er the tall woods have broke,
Now perch, thou whale, upon the sturdy oak.

Sturdy oak? No; steady, strong, strapping, stiff. Stiff? No; stiff is too short.

What feast for fish! Oh too luxurious treat!
When hungry dolphins feed on butchers meat.

Foss. Niece, why, niece, niece! Oh, *Melpomene*, thou goddess of tragedy, suspend thy influence for a moment, and suffer my niece to give me a rational answer.

The main portion of the first act is devoted to a development of the satiric representation of an authoress, and the character is given special point by the fact that it was intended for Lady Winchilsea. Probably no woman of the time was more cruelly pilloried. Exactly why Pope chose to give so disagreeable a picture of her it would be difficult to say, but fortunately one is not obliged to give a reasonable basis for Pope's satirical sketches. For the occasion it is sufficient to say that her dramatic attempts were not to his taste, and that some obscure personal irritation led him to take the opportunity of this play to speak his mind.

In minor points the character might be counted fairly applicable to Lady Winchilsea. Her learning, her devotion to literary pursuits, her fecundity in verse, her opposition to amatory themes, her detestation of the modern stage, are all characteristics that tally with the burlesque portrait. Lady Winchilsea was also very religious, and though herself maid of honor to Mary of Modena and so necessarily much in the corrupt Restoration court, was even unnecessarily strict and severe on the subject of morals and manners. This prudishness was satirized by Phœbe Clinket's boast that she is "unwilling to stand even on the brink of an indecorum," as a result of which delicacy she has never allowed in her plays "the libertinism of lip-embraces," and this in spite of the fact that Aristotle never actually prohibited kissing on the stage. But in the main points of Phœbe Clinket's self-confidence and her determination to push her play at all hazards to the point of public presentation, there is no hint of a likeness to Lady Winchilsea, who was exceedingly modest and deprecatory about her work. She never willingly allowed her dramatic writings to pass beyond a small domestic and literary circle, nor out of her voluminous verse did any but a very small portion reach publication with her permission. Furthermore, the tragedy of *The Universal Deluge* attributed to Phœbe Clinket bears no resemblance to any extant work by Lady Winchilsea.

Taken as a whole, quite apart from any personal application, Phœbe Clinket is the most detestable picture of a learned lady in any of the comedies. She is vain, boastful, and superficial; she is a pedant, a prude, and a hypocrite; and there are no mitigating traits.

Colley Cibber put on his play *The Refusal* at Covent Garden in 1721 and published it the same year. It is a close version of *Les Femmes Savantes*, the rich, middle-class family of Sir Gilbert Wrangle in Cibber's play being the counterpart of the wealthy bourgeois family of Chrysal in Molière. The action follows that of Molière's play, and Molière gives the model for many of the important situations and conversations. Curll

called *The Refusal* merely "a Sampler, whereon Monsieur Molière's Stitching may easily be perceived from Mr. Cibber's canvas." [1] But Cibber's play is a success in that it is a brilliant English adaptation of the French original. The two characters that represent learned ladies are Lady Wrangle and her daughter Sophronia.

Sir Gilbert thus describes his wife to Mr. Frankly: "She 's a great plague to me. Not but my lord bishop, her uncle, was a mighty good man; she lived all along with him; I took her upon his word; 't was he made her a scholar; I thought her a miracle; before I had her I used to go and hear her talk Latin with him an hour together; and there I — I — I played the fool." Throughout the play Sir Gilbert is very evidently a member of "the hen-pecked fraternity." Lady Wrangle has an important place in but two scenes and in both of these she endeavors to domineer over her husband. In the scene with the maid he is completely cowed, and in the scene of the wedding contract he is triumphant only because of abundant friendly backing. Lady Wrangle's quarrelsome, jealous disposition is perhaps more in evidence than her learning, but she has learning too. She quotes Latin whenever possible and is herself an authoress.

The famous scene in Molière where the maid Martine is to be dismissed for her indifference to Vaugelas and the laws of grammar, becomes in Cibber a similar hurly-burly against the maid and the cook for having used a sheet of one of Lady Wrangle's productions in which to wrap the roast. The maid — "a brainless ideat," "a dunce," "an illiterate monster," "an eleventh plague of Egypt," according to the energetic vituperation of her mistress — seeing the leaf to be blotted and blurred took it for waste paper.

Blurred! you driveller! Was ever any piece perfect, that had not corrections, erasures, interlineations, and improvements! Does not the very original show, that when the mind is warmest, it is never satisfied with its words:

[1] Curll: *No Fool like Wits*, Prologue.

Incipit et dubitat; scribit, damnatque tabellas,
Et notat, et delet; mutat, culpatque probatque.

The leaf in question is a part of Lady Wrangle's translation of the passion of Byblis. Her husband calls it the passion of Bibble-Babble, and says, "If a line on't happens to be mislaid, she 's as mad as a blind mare that has lost her foal; she 'll run her head against a stone-wall to recover it. All the use I find of her learning is, that it furnishes her more words to scold with."

Lady Wrangle's creed as expressed to Charlotte is, "Refine your soul; give your happier hours up to science, arts, and letters; enjoy the raptures of philosophy, subdue your passions, and renounce the sensual commerce of mankind." She, however, claims Frankly as her lover, a virtuous and platonic one, to be sure, but so irrevocably hers as to preclude significant attentions to others. When she learns of his open love to Charlotte — she exclaims, "I thought virtue, letters, and philosophy had only charms for him: I have known his soul all rapture in their praises." And her indignation that he should "contaminate his intellects with such a chit of an animal" changes her platonic love into the most jealous hate. Her philosophy as to the proper conduct of the passions has no influence on her actions.

Sophronia is unlike her prototype Armande, in that Cibber converts her some time before the end of the play and she takes a husband with a delight equal to that of Charlotte herself. Sophronia was, on her father's second marriage, when he was foolishly enamoured of Lady Wrangle's Latin, put into the hands of the Bishop to be made by him into a second prodigy of learning. She had also the advantage of being instructed by her stepmother in the doctrines of platonic love. Her learning, her doctrine of the union of souls, her enthusiasm for poetry, all give an effect of genuineness. Her lover Granger understands her well. He grants her "half mad with learning and philosophy," but still "a fool of parts and capable of thinking right." Frankly had formerly made love to her in conventional fashion, but to him she had shown herself a marble-hearted lady, a

proud and haughty prude. But Granger knows how to approach her. He humors all her romantic notions, chimes in with all her raptures in the air, scouts all love that is but an affair of the veins and the arteries, exalts only the sexless union of harmonious minds and souls, quotes Latin, declaims blank verse, makes slow and delicate and utterly submissive and reluctant approaches to so mundane a thought as marriage, and finally she falls a victim to blandishments so adroitly mingled. Granger's words, like Hybla drops, distil upon her sense; faint philosophy deserts her; and "like a wounded dove" she "trembling hovers to her mate for succour" in the most approved romantic style. When her stepmother says accusingly, "What then becomes of your Platonic system?" she answers, "Dissolved, evaporated, impracticable, and fallacious all: you'll own I have labour'd in the experiment, but found at last, that to try gold in a crucible of virgin-wax was a mere female folly." And she closes the play with

> In vain, against the force of nature's law,
> Would rigid morals keep our hearts in awe;
> All our lost labours of the brain but prove,
> In life there's no philosophy like love.

The characters of Lady Wrangle and Sophronia with their affectations and useless learning are emphasized by the natural, sensible Charlotte who serves as a foil. She is a gay, laughing, wheedling, fascinating little rogue with a quick wit, and a genius for common sense. She cannot believe that a soul was crammed into a body just to spoil sport and she gives her whole nature free play. She loves Mr. Frankly and says so, and she avows her preference for marriage as against philosophical mysteries. Her praises are recited by Mr. Frankly in the words, "As she does not read Aristotle, Plato, Plutarch, or Seneca, she is neither romantic nor vain of her pedantry; and as her learning never went higher than Bickerstaff's Letters, her manners are consequently natural, modest and agreeable."

In Bickerstaff's *Lionel and Clarissa* (1768), Sir John Flowerdew seems quite in advance of his age in securing a tutor for his

daughter and in considering "a little knowledge" necessary for a woman. "I am far," he says, "from considering ignorance as a desirable characteristic; when intelligence is not attended with impertinent affectation, it teaches them [women] to judge with precision, and gives them a degree of solidity necessary for the companion of a sensible man." This, however, is a cool statement of theory. When his daughter outwits him and marries the tutor, he has a violent reaction in favor of the straitest training a maid can have:

Girls like squirrels oft appear,
In their cages, pleased with flav'ry,
But, in fact, 't is all but knav'ry;
Less thro' love than out of fear:
Only on their tricks relying,
Let them out, their hands untying,
And You'll see the matter plain.
Once there's naught their flight to hamper,
Presto — whisk-away they scamper;
Never to return again.
Wou'd you manage lasses rightly,
You must watch them daily, nightly,
Shut them close, and hold them tightly;
Never loose an inch of chain:
Freedom, run-aways will make 'em,
And the devil can't o'ertake 'em.

Except for *Lionel and Clarissa* there were after Cibber's *Refusal* few representations of the learned lady as a comic type, until after the revival of the comedy of manners under Sheridan and Goldsmith. The sentimental comedy was occupied in rescuing super-sensitive, over-refined, delicate, tearful, and helpless heroines from the plots of abnormally dark villains, and in bestowing the prizes thus captured on the high-minded, self-conscious Sir Charles Grandisons who posed as heroes of the play. Comic types fell by the way until Goldsmith succeeded in his knight-errantry in behalf of the goddess of fun, and routed sensibility, and sentimentality. And the learned ladies in the comedy after 1770 represent a new kind of learn-

ing, and the ladies themselves are in many respects unlike their sisters of an earlier date.

II. The Novel-Reading Girl as a Comic Type

The learned-lady theme had an interesting variant in the novel-reading girl. This type, as it appeared in comedy and fiction, is also of French origin. It finds its direct ancestry in Molière's *Les Précieuses* (1659), a satiric representation of the vogue of the French romances, most of which appeared in the twenty-five years before *Les Précieuses*.[1]

Along with the vogue of the romances came the critical comment. Scarron's *Roman Comique* (1651) burlesqued La Calprenède. Boileau's *Héros de Romans* (1664) and *L'Art Poétique* (1674) satirized especially the romances of Scudéry. The two satires that showed the effect of the romances on the minds of young girls were Molière's *Les Précieuses* and later Furetière's *Roman Bourgeois* (1666).

These romances and satires were almost as well known in the original to cultivated Englishmen as they were to Frenchmen. There were also numerous translations. Between 1647 and 1660 *Polexandre*, *Cassandre*, *Ibrahim*, *Artemène*, *Clélie*, *Almahide*, *Cléopâtre*, all appeared in English versions, and some of them several times. And the satires were also promptly translated. There is no better illustration of the general English familiarity with those romances than that furnished by the letters Dorothy Osborne wrote to Sir William Temple in 1652–54. The Hôtel de Rambouillet coterie itself could hardly have been more nearly letter perfect in the details than was this young English lady. Her reading becomes so absorbing that her grave lover finds it necessary to caution her against the "late hours" reported to

[1] Seigneur de Gomberville brought out his *Polexandre* in four volumes, quarto, in 1632. More famous were La Calprenède's romances, *Cléopâtre*, *Cassandre*, and *Pharamond*, and the works of the Scudéry brother and sister (the sister being the chief writer) who wrote *Ibrahim*, *Artemène*, *Clélie*, and *Almahide*. All of these except *Polexandre* were published and some of them republished in France between 1641 and 1661. Their interminable length may be illustrated by *Artemène* which was in ten volumes, a total of 6679 pages.

him. She is penitent, but her enthusiasm is unabated. Parts of *Cléopâtre*, she says, pleased her more than anything she had ever read in her life. She confesses that she cried an hour together over the sad story of Almanzor, and was so angry with Alcidiana that she could never love her after. But she is no uncritical admirer of the heroes and heroines. Her sense of humor does not forsake her. She laughs at *L'Amant Jaloux*, in *Cyrus*, as one who seeks his own vexation, and *L'Amant mon Aimé* was "an ass." Sir William's interest in the romances is hardly less than Dorothy's. She sends him the separate volumes as she completes them, and there is a lively interchange of impressions and comments on various characters and situations.[1]

After the Restoration the fondness for romances may have been somewhat lessened by the new passion for the theater. But romance-readers were still numerous. Pepys tells us that his wife sat up till twelve over the *Grand Cyrus*. Again he says, "I find my wife troubled at my checking her last night in a coach in her long stories out of the *Grand Cyrus* which she would tell, though nothing to the purpose, nor in any good manner." However, he must have repented of his rigor, for we find him later calling at Martin's his book-seller's, where he bought *Cassandre* and some other French books for his wife's closet. And Mr. Pepys himself confesses to at least one Sunday devoted to French romances.[2]

That Mr. and Mrs. Pepys were not alone in their tastes is made evident by contemporary arraignment of the romances as harmful influences. Mr. Pepys records a conversation with a Mr. Wilson who protested passionately against them as perverters of history. *The Ladies' Calling* (1673) brings the matter home to daily life:

> There is another thing to which some devote a very considerable part of their time, and that is the reading Romances, which seems now to be thought the peculiar and only becoming study of young

[1] *Letters from Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple, passim.*

[2] Pepys: *Diary*, Dec. 7, 1660; Feb. 10, 1661; May 12, 1666; Nov. 16, 1668; May 5, 1669.

ladies. I confess their youth may a little adapt it to them when they were Children, and I wish they were always in their event as harmless; but I fear they often leave ill impressions behind them. Those amorous passions which 't is their design to paint to the utmost life are apt to insinuate themselves into their unwary Readers, and by an unhappy inversion a Copy shall produce an Original. When a poor young Creature shall read there of some triumphant Beauty, that has I know not how many captiv'd Knights prostrate at her feet, she will probably be tempted to think it a fine thing; and may reflect how much she loses time, that has not yet subdued *one* heart; and then her business will be to spread her nets, lay her toils to catch somebody who will more fatally ensnare her. And when she has once worried herself into an amour, those authors are subtil Casuists for all difficult cases that may occur in it, will instruct in the necessary artifices of deluding parents and friends, and put her ruin perfectly in her own power. And truly this seems to be so natural a consequent of this sort of study, that of all the divertisements that look so innocently, they can scarce fall upon any more hazardous. Indeed 't is very difficult to imagine what mischief is done to the world by the false notions and images of things: particularly of Love and Honour, those noblest concerns of human life, represented in these mirrors.[1]

The popularity of the French romances and the protests they aroused would naturally make the romance-loving girl a type of genuine social interest, and it is surprising that this element of Molière's *Les Précieuses* was not sooner taken up in English comedy. There were, to be sure, occasional references to romance-reading something in the style of Molière. In Shadwell's *Bury-Fair* (1689), for instance, Gertrude is apparently familiar "with Romances and Love and Honour Plays," and she complains that all the lovers talk so in the style of the romances that a girl knows in advance just what compliments she must listen to.[2] And in Wright's *Female Vertuosos* (1693) Sir Maurice says, "O' my Conscience, Women's Heads, now-a-days, are so stuff't up with their Trash of Romances and Poetry, that there is no Room left in 'em for Reason, or Common Sense." Later he bewails his fate more bitterly: "This Plague of Wit has infected all my Servants, even my little Boy, for-

[1] *The Ladies' Calling*, part II, section II.

[2] Shadwell, Thomas: *Bury-Fair*, Act III, Sc. 1.

sooth, can not turn the Spit now without a *Pharamond* or a *Cassandra* in his hand." But it was not till Steele's *Tender Husband* in 1705 that the romance-reading girl appeared in England as a developed type. Steele's Biddy Tipkin [1] is nearly half a century later than Molière's Madelon and Cathos, but they are her unquestioned ancestors.

In Molière's play the two country girls endeavor to apply to real life the ideas they have gained from the romances. Gorgibus, the father of Madelon and uncle of Cathos, is a worthy citizen whose common-sense views of life subject him to the scornful raillery of the young ladies. He endeavors to provide them with good husbands, but his straightforward methods shock their romance-tutored minds. To be greeted at the first interview with marriage proposals is a crude and coarse proceeding. If Cyrus had married Mandane, and Clélie had married Aronce at once, what would have become of Mademoiselle de Scudéry's romances *Artemène* and *Clélie?* The dull Gorgibus, and the lovers he has brought are hopelessly ignorant of *le carte de Tendre*, ignorant of the regions known as *Billets-doux*, *Petits-soins*, *Billets-galants*, *Jolis-vers*, and the other exactly marked stages of a well-wrought courtship. The young ladies even doubt the reality of their relationship to Gorgibus, and they reject the names Cathos and Madelon in favor of Polixène and Aminte. Gorgibus attributes all their vagaries to the reading of romances, and in the climax of his irritation exclaims to the stock of offending volumes, "*Et vous, qui êtes cause de leur folie, sottes billeveseés, pernicieux amusements des esprits oisifs, romans, vers, chansons, sonnets et sonnettes, puissiez-vous être à tous les diables!*"

The fundamental idea and many of the satiric details in the presentation of Biddy Tipkin in Steele's *The Tender Husband* exactly follow the French model. Biddy's reading is identical with that of Madelon and Cathos, but wider in scope. She refers familiarly to passages or characters in *Cléopâtre*, *Cassandre*, *Pharamond*, *Ibrahim*, *Artemène*, *Clélie*, and *Almahide*, showing

[1] Steele, Richard: *The Tender Husband; or, The Accomplished Fools* (1705).

that she had practically covered the field of romance. She is an heiress under the charge of her uncle, Hezekiah Tipkin, a banker of Lombard Street, and his sister, "an antiquated virgin with a mighty affectation for youth." Pounce, a lawyer on the lookout for a rich match for his client, the impecunious Captain Cleremont, describes Biddy thus: "Well then, since we may be free, you must understand, the young lady, by being kept from the world, has made a world of her own. She has spent all her solitude in reading romances, her head is full of shepherds, knights, flowery meads, groves, and streams, so that if you talk like a man of this world to her, you do nothing." But Cleremont, quite equal to the situation, responds, "Oh, let me alone — I have been a great traveller in fairy-land myself, I know Oroondates; Cassandra, Astræa, and Clelia are my intimate acquaintance." Pounce predicts success for the fluent Captain, but there are other plans for Biddy. Her guardians wish her to marry her cousin, Humphry Gubbin, a country lout, familiarly known as "Numps." Her attitude towards him and towards her prosaic aunt appears in the following conversation:

Niece. Was it not my gallant that whistled so charmingly in the parlour before he went out this morning? He's a most accomplished cavalier.

Aunt. Come, niece, come; you don't do well to make sport with your relations, especially with a young gentleman that has so much kindness for you.

Niece. Kindness for me! What a phrase is there to express the darts and flames, the sighs and languishings, of an expecting lover!

Aunt. Pray, niece, forbear this idle trash, and talk like other people. Your cousin Humphry will be true and hearty in what he says, and that's a great deal better than the talk and compliment of romances.

Niece. Good madam, don't wound my ears with such expressions; do you think I can ever love a man that's true and hearty? What a peasant-like amour do these coarse words import! True and hearty! Pray, aunt, endeavour a little at the embellishment of your style.

Aunt. Alack-a-day, cousin Biddy, these idle romances have quite turned your head.

Niece. How often must I desire you, madam, to lay aside that fa-

miliar name, cousin Biddy? I never hear it without blushing — Did you ever meet with a heroine in those idle romances, as you call 'em, that was termed Biddy?

Aunt. Ah! cousin, cousin, these are mere vapours, indeed; nothing but vapours.

Niece. No, the heroine has always something soft and engaging in her name; something that gives us a notion of the sweetness of her beauty and behaviour; a name that glides through half-a-dozen tender syllables, as Elismonda, Clidamira, Deidamia, that runs upon vowels off the tongue; not hissing through one's teeth, or breaking them with consonants. 'T is strange rudeness those familiar names they give us, when there is Aurelia, Sacharissa, Gloriana, for people of condition; and Celia, Chloris, Corinna, Mopsa, for their maids and those of lower rank.

Aunt. Look ye, Biddy, this is not to be supported. I know not where you learned this nicety; but I can tell you, forsooth, as much as you despise it, your mother was a Bridget afore you, and an excellent house-wife.

Niece. Good madam, don't upbraid me with my mother Bridget, and an excellent house-wife.

Aunt. Yes, I say she was; and spent her time in better learning than you ever did — not in reading of fights and battles of dwarfs and giants, but in writing out receipts for broths, possets, caudles, and surfeit-waters, as became a good country gentlewoman.

Niece. My mother, and a Bridget!

Aunt. Yes, niece, I say again, your mother, my sister, was a Bridget! the daughter of her mother Margery, of her mother Sisly, of her mother Alice.

Niece. Have you no mercy? Oh, the barbarous genealogy!

Aunt. Of her mother Winifred, of her mother Joan.

Niece. Since you will run on, then I must needs tell you I am not satisfied in the point of my nativity. Many an infant has been placed in a cottage with obscure parents, till by chance some ancient servant of the family has known it by its marks.

Aunt. Ay, you had best be searched — That's like your calling the winds the fanning gales, before I don't know how much company; and the tree that was blown by it had, forsooth, a spirit imprisoned in the trunk of it.

Niece. Ignorance!

Aunt. Then a cloud this morning had a flying dragon in it.

Niece. What eyes had you, that you could see nothing? For my part I look upon it to be a prodigy, and expect something extraordinary will happen to me before night. . . . But you have a gross relish of

things. What noble descriptions in romances had been lost, if the writers had been persons of your gout?

Aunt. I wish the authors had been hanged, and their books burnt, before you had seen 'em.

Niece. Simplicity!

Aunt. A parcel of improbable lies.

Niece. Indeed, madam, your raillery is coarse —

Aunt. Fit only to corrupt young girls, and fill their heads with a thousand foolish dreams of I don't know what.

Niece. Nay, now, madam, you grow extravagant.

Aunt. What I say is not to vex, but advise you for your good.

Niece. What, to burn Philocles, Artaxeres, Oroondates, and the rest of the heroic lovers, and take my country booby, cousin Humphry, for a husband!

Aunt. Oh dear, oh dear, Biddy! Pray, good dear, learn to act and speak like the rest of the world; come, come, you shall marry your cousin and live comfortably.

Niece. Live comfortably! What kind of life is that? A great heiress live comfortably! Pray, aunt, learn to raise your ideas — What is, I wonder, to live comfortably?

Aunt. To live comfortably is to live with prudence and frugality, as we do in Lombard Street.

By mere force of contrast the way is open for the smooth-tongued Mr. Cleremont. He meets the ladies in the park with such phrases as "the cool breath of the morning," "the season of pearly dews and gentle zephyrs," and Biddy is enraptured. After the adroit withdrawal of the aunt by Pounce, Cleremont well maintains with Biddy his reputation as a traveler in fairy-land, and assumes likewise the military prowess without which no romance hero was complete. He soon cleverly turns the conversation to a proposal of marriage, but Biddy understands the laws of romance too well to yield immediately. They part in the true spirit of *Cassandre.*

Cler. We enjoy here, madam, all the pretty landscapes of the country without the pains of going thither.

Niece. Art and nature are in a rivalry, or rather a confederacy, to adorn this beauteous park with all the agreeable variety of water, shade, walks, and air. What can be more charming than these flowery lawns?

Cler. Or these gloomy shades —

Niece. Or these embroidered valleys —

Cler. Or that transparent stream —

Niece. Or these bowing branches on the banks of it, that seem to admire their own beauty in the crystal mirror?

Cler. I am surprised, madam, at the delicacy of your phrase. Can such expressions come from Lombard Street?

Niece. Alas, sir! what can be expected from an innocent virgin that has been immured almost one-and-twenty years from the conversation of mankind, under the care of an Urganda [1] of an aunt?

Cler. Bless me, madam, how have you been abused! Many a lady before your age has had an hundred lances broken in her service, and as many dragons cut to pieces in honour of her.

Niece. Oh, the charming man! [*Aside.*]

Cler. Do you believe Pamela was one-and-twenty before she knew Musidorus? [2]

Niece. I could hear him ever. [*Aside.*]

Cler. A lady of your wit and beauty might have given occasion for a whole romance in folio before that age.

Niece. Oh, the powers! Who can he be? — Oh, youth unknown — But let me, in the first place, know whom I talk to, for, sir, I am wholly unacquainted both with your person and your history. You seem, indeed, by your deportment, and the distinguishing mark of your bravery which you bear, to have been in a conflict. May I not know what cruel beauty obliged you to such adventures till she pitied you?

Cler. Oh, the pretty coxcomb! [*Aside.*] — Oh, Blenheim, Blenheim! Oh, Cordelia, Cordelia!

Niece. You mention the place of battle. I would fain hear an exact description of it. Our public papers are so defective; they don't so much as tell us how the sun rose on that glorious day — Were there not a great many flights of vultures before the battle began?

Cler. Oh, madam, they have eaten up half my acquaintance.

Niece. Certainly never birds of prey were so feasted; by report, they might have lived half-a-year on the very legs and arms our troops left behind 'em.

Cler. Had we not fought near a wood we should never have got legs enough to have come home upon. The joiner of the Foot Guards has made his fortune by it.

Niece. I shall never forgive your General. He has put all my an-

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[1] Urganda was an enchantress in the Amadis and Palmerin romances.

[2] Musidorus, in Sir P. Sidney's *Arcadia*, is the Prince of Thessaly, and in love with Pamela.

cient heroes out of countenance; he has pulled down Cyrus and Alexander, as much as Louis-le-Grand — But your own part in that action?

Cler. Only that slight hurt, for the astrologer said at my nativity, nor fire, nor sword, nor pike, nor musket shall destroy this child, let him but avoid fair eyes — But, madam, may n't I crave the name of her that has so captivated my heart?

Niece. I can't guess whom you mean by that description; but if you ask my name, I must confess you put me upon revealing what I always keep as the greatest secret I have — for would you believe it, they have called me — I don't know how to own it, but they have called me — Bridget.

Cler. Bridget?

Niece. Bridget.

Cler. Bridget?

Niece. Spare my confusion, I beseech you, sir; and if you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthenissa,[1] for that 's the name I have assumed ever since I came to years of discretion.

Cler. The insupportable tyranny of parents, to fix names on helpless infants which they must blush at all their lives after! I don't think there's a surname in the world to match it.

Niece. No! What do you think of Tipkin?

Cler. Tipkin! Why, I think if I was a young lady that had it I'd part with it immediately.

Niece. Pray, how would you get rid of it?

Cler. I'd change it for another. I could recommend to you three very pretty syllables — What do you think of Cleremont?

Niece. Cleremont! Cleremont! Very well — but what right have I to it?

Cler. If you will give me leave, I'll put you in possession of it. By a very few words I can make it over to you, and your children after you.

Niece. O fie! Whither are you running? You know a lover should sigh in private, and languish whole years before he reveals his passion; he should retire into some solitary grove, and make the woods and wild beasts his confidants. You should have told it to the echo half-a-year before you had discovered it, even to my handmaid.

Cler. What can a lover do, madam, now the race of giants is extinct? Had I lived in those days there had not been a mortal six foot high, but should have owned Parthenissa for the paragon of beauty,

[1] Parthenissa was the heroine of a romance of that name by Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, the first two parts of which appeared in 1651.

or measured his length on the ground — Parthenissa should have been heard by the brooks and deserts at midnight, the echo's burden and the river's murmur.

Niece. That had been a golden age, indeed! But see, my aunt has left her grave companion and is coming toward us — I command you to leave me.

Cler. Thus Oroondates, when Statira [1] dismissed him her presence, threw himself at her feet, and implored permission but to live. [*Offering to kneel.*]

Niece. And thus Statira raised him from the earth, permitting him to live and love.

But Biddy has not the cold constitution of the romance heroines and she presently acknowledges that she finds in herself all the symptoms of a raging amour. "I love solitude," she soliloquizes, "I grow pale, I sigh frequently. I call upon the name of Cleremont when I don't think of it — His person is ever in my eyes, and his voice in my ears — Methinks I long to lose myself in some pensive grove, or to hang over the head of some warbling fountain, with a lute in my hand, softening the murmurs of the waters." And in spite of her reluctance to abridge courtship and so shut off "all further decoration of disguise, serenade and adventure," she finally consents to an immediate elopement, declaring that if Oroondates had been as pressing as Cleremont *Cassandra* would have been but a pocket-book.

Biddy, her aunt, and her two suitors, form the most delightful group of characters in the comedy of manners before Goldsmith and Sheridan. And Biddy can hold her own against any of the heroines except Congreve's Millamant. Nance Oldfield created the character in 1705 and it continued to be a favorite on the stage. The play was given several times nearly every year to 1736 and occasionally afterwards, so that the character of Biddy was one often before the public.

There are also other indications that the topic of romance-reading was one of continued interest. In 1748 there appeared

[1] Statira, in *Cassandra*, was the widow of Alexander the Great, and the daughter of Darius. She married Oroondates after many difficulties had been overcome.

the second edition of an anonymous work entitled *The Lady's Drawing-Room. Being a Faithful Picture of the Great World.* One chapter entitled "The Adventures of Marilla" presents a character following in the wake of "Biddy Tipkin" and antedating the *Female Quixote* by perhaps a decade:

Marilla was a young Lady, who, from her most early years, discover'd an uncommon Capacity, and, as she grew up, made a wonderful Progress, not only in those Accomplishments usually allowed to her own Sex, but also in some of those which more properly appertain to ours. While a Child herself, she despis'd all childish Diversions, and, as she was not a Companion for those of riper Years, instead of playing with those of her own, she amus'd herself with Reading, in which she took such an infinite Delight, that, for a Book she had never seen before, she would forego any other Satisfaction could be offer'd her; and, tho' any one who had been present when she was thus employ'd, and saw with what Swiftness her Eye pass'd from the Top of every Page to the Bottom, would have thought it impossible for her to receive much Advantage from the Contents, yet was her Apprehension so acute, and her Memory so retentive, that whatever she look'd over in this Manner was as much her own, as if she had been the author of it. — What could be more amazing than to hear a Girl, of ten or eleven Years of Age, quote Passages from Pliny, Livy, and Sallust, talk of the Policies of Princes, compare their several Interests, and the Motives on which War and Peace were made, and make such Observations on them as could rarely be contradicted! What might not have been expected from such a Genius when Time had ripen't it to Perfection? — She had also strong Notions of Philosophy, Morality, and Divinity, and had only such Books, as tended to the Improvement of her Mind, been thrown in her Way, she had doubtless made one of the most shining Characters that any Age or Nation has produced; but unhappily, she was likewise too well acquainted with Cassandra, Cleopatra, Grand Cyrus, Pharamond, and other fabulous Treatises, which poison'd her Way of Thinking, and gave her a certain Bent of Mind, to which she ow'd all the Misfortunes of her future Life. Indeed, I think, there cannot be any Thing more pernicious to Youth, than the suffering them to read those idle and voluminous Adventures, which have no Foundation either in Truth, or good Sense, and I heartily wish, for the Sake not only of the young Lady I am speaking of, but of many others whose Reason has been perverted by them, tho' perhaps not in an equal Degree, that the Government would forbid all such Books from being sold or printed. . . . Marilla was always obliging, and affable to every Body, but those who, as I

said before, declared themselves her Lovers; now was this owing to either the Insensibility of her Heart, or to an Imagination, that all who address'd her were unworthy to do so, but to those romantick Notions she had imbib'd, by reading in what Manner the fictitious Ladies of Antiquity had behav'd. She has often, since Time and a melancholy Experience of the World, has mortify'd this Foible, confess'd, That at that Time, she thought it the most audacious and presuming Thing in the World for a Man, to make any publick Declaration of his Passion, 'till he had suffer'd the Pangs of it, in secret, for three or four Years. — That, even then, he ought not to do it, unless Fortune had presented him with the Opportunity of ushering it in by some extraordinary Service, and that, whenever he express'd himself on that Head, it should be in such ambiguous Terms, and with so much Timidity, that it should rather be from his alter'd Countenance, and despairing Air The Object of his Affections should perceive he lov'd her, than by any Words he could be able to speak. — Then, as to her own Part in this Farce, it seem'd to her the utmost Indecency in a Woman to listen to any amorous Proposals, 'till the Lover had griev'd himself to a Skeleton, and was on the Point of falling on his own Sword; nor, when he had arriv'd at that Pitch of Desperation, was she to vouchsafe him any greater Favour than a Command to live. — That, after seven Years, she might, tho' with an infinite Shew of Reluctance, allow him to kiss her Hand, confess she pity'd him, but no more; — And, if he persevered a second Apprenticeship in the same Manner, perhaps, that is, if she found none more worthy, reward his faithful Service, by giving herself to him.

These, she acknowledged, were the Ideas she had of Love and Courtship; but, none of her Admirers acting in any Degree answerable to them, she look'd on all the Professions of Love made to her, as so many Affronts, and return'd them only with picquant Repartees, or sullen Silence.

In 1752 Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, in *The Female Quixote*, gave an even more detailed picture of a girl obsessed by romances. Arabella was left motherless when very young, and her father lived in retirement with her on a vast estate in a remote province. She was very beautiful, and she was trained under the best masters in dancing, French, and Italian. But this excellent education had less influence on Arabella than the great store of French romances left by her mother who had bought them to relieve the tedium of life in the lonely castle. Suppos-

ing these romances to be pictures of real life, Arabella founded all her notions and expectations on them. She was on the alert for love adventures, and she misinterpreted the most ordinary actions or phrases into some romantic possibility. Arabella had a good mind, lively wit, a sweet temper, a thousand amiable qualities, but her romantic notions permeated her thoughts and feelings till she became involved in constant absurdities. Generosity, courage, virtue, love, were of value to her only as interpreted by the romances. Her lover, a courteous, frank, handsome man of the ordinary world, found all his attractions clouded over when he unfortunately fell asleep over some chapters in the romances especially selected for his admiration and imitation.

Mrs. Lennox's story satirizes nearly all the salient characteristics of the French romances. She burlesques their length and the ever-recurring histories, adventures, episodes. The romance conception of courtship and marriage, the lady's power of life and death over her lover, the exaggerated military prowess of the lover, the emphasis on unknown but illustrious birth, the bombastic language, the use of disguises, abductions, banishments, the long, argumentative conversations, the odd romance letters with high-flown superscriptions and signatures, and florid, stilted style, the romantic falsification of history, are some of the many elements clearly portrayed by Mrs. Lennox. But in spite of the minute accuracy of her work, Mrs. Lennox's Arabella yields in definiteness of impression as well as in veracity and charm to Biddy Tipkin.

Shortly after *The Female Quixote* came a little poem by Mrs. Monk entitled "On a Romantick Lady" in which a lover says to his mistress:

> This poring over your *Grand Cyrus*
> Must ruin you, and will quite tire us.
> It makes you think, that an affront 't is,
> Unless your lover 's an *Orontes*,
> And courts you with a passion frantick,
> In manner and in stile romantick.

Now tho' I count myself no Zero,
I don't pretend to be an hero.
Or a by-blow of him that thunders,
Nor are you one of the sev'n wonders.
But a young damser very pretty,
And your true name is Mistress *Betty*.

With Mrs. Lennox and Mrs. Monk we seem to come to the end of the satire on the romance-reading girls. But in 1756 we find in Murphy's *Apprentice* a young man, a Mr. Gargle, an apothecary's apprentice, whose wits have gone astray through reading romances. "An absurd, ridiculous, a silly empty-headed coxcomb," exclaims his exasperated father, "with his *Cassanders* and his *Cloppatras*, and his trumpery; with his Romances, and his damn'd plays and his *Odyssey* Popes, and a parcel of fellows not worth a groat!" Charlotte, Mr. Gargle's innamorata, was "as innocent as water-gruel" before he taught her to read play-books; but she was not permanently injured by them, for before she had read far her father locked her books away and confined her in her room. In the projected romantic escape Charlotte is all practicality and good sense, but Mr. Gargle demands rope-ladders, moonlight, emotions, attitudes, and poetical quotations, and so spoils all.

But Mr. Gargle lags behind his generation. Romances were being rapidly replaced by the novel. Between 1740 and 1753 *Pamela*, *Joseph Andrews*, *Jonathan Wild*, *Clarissa Harlowe*, *Tom Jones*, *Amelia*, and *Sir Charles Grandison* had established the new species. And the romance-reading girl speedily gives way to the novel-reading girl.

The first representative of this type comes in 1760 in George Colman's *Polly Honeycomb*, at the very end of the period we are considering. In the Prologue Colman shows a clear recognition of the change of type. He says:

Hither in days of yore, from Spain or France,
Came a dread sorceress, her name ROMANCE.
O'er Britain's isle her wayward spell she cast,
And common sense in magick chain bound fast.

In mad sublime did each fond lover wooe,
And in heroicks ran each *billet-doux:*
High deeds of chivalry their sole delight,
Each fair a maid distress'd, each swain a knight.
Then might *Statira Oroondates* see,
At tilts and tournaments, arm'd cap-a-pie.
She too, on milk-white palfrey, lance in hand,
A dwarf to guard her, pranc'd about the land.

. . . . . .

But now, the dear delight of later years,
The younger sister of ROMANCE appears:
Less solemn in her air, her drift the same,
And NOVEL her enchanting, charming, name.
ROMANCE might strike our grave forfathers' pomp,
But NOVEL for our buck and lively romp!
Cassandra's folios now no longer read,
See, two neat pocket-volumes in their stead!
And then so *sentimental* is the stile.
So chaste, yet so bewitching all the while!
Plot, and elopement, passion, rape, and rapture,
The total sum of ev'ry dear — dear — Chapter.
'T is not alone the small-talk and the smart,
'T is NOVEL most beguiles the female heart.
Miss reads—she melts—she sighs—Love steals upon her—
And then — Alas, poor girl! — goodnight, poor honour!

When Colman published the play he prefixed a list of one hundred and eighty-two novels which purports to be an "Extract from the catalogue of one of our most popular circulating libraries; from which extract the reader may, without any great degree of shrewdness, strain the moral of this performance."[1]

[1] Chambers, in *Traditions of Edinburgh* (1869), says that Allan Ramsay in 1725 set up "a circulating library, whence he diffused plays and other books of fiction among the people of Edinburgh. It appears from some private notes of the historian Wodrow that, in 1728, the magistrates, moved by some meddling spirits, took alarm at the effect of this kind of reading on the minds of youth, and made an attempt to put it down, but without effect."

The editor of *Notes and Queries* (4th Series, vol. IX, p. 443) says, "We are inclined to think the first circulating library in Scotland was in Dunfermline in 1711."

Scotland was ahead of England in the matter of circulating libraries. So far as I can discover, Newcastle-on-Tyne has the honor of starting the first circulating library in England. One Joseph Barber had "lent books on the High

Of these books over one hundred are in the form of "Lives," "Memoirs," or "Adventures." The list contains the principal novels of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, but the majority

Bridge, at the other end of the Flesh Market, in 1746, and now, in 1757, at Amen Corner, near St. Nicholas's Churchyard, he had 1257 volumes on loan. His was the 'old original' library of circulation." In 1757 a rival appeared in the person of William Charnley who placed two thousand volumes at the command of subscribers at twelve shillings a year. (*Notes and Queries*, 5th Series, vol. VIII, p. 155.)

In 1751 a circulating library was opened in Birmingham by the famous William Hutton, who wrote in his *Autobiography*, "I was the first who opened a circulating library in Birmingham, in 1751, since which time many have entered the race." He also said, "As I hired out books the fair sex did not neglect my shop." In 1750 there had been opened at Birmingham a book-club for the circulation of books among its members — "probably the oldest book-club in existence," and still flourishing in 1877. The Manchester subscription library dates from 1765, or earlier. (*Ibid.*, 5th Series, vol. VII, p. 452.) The circulating library of Liverpool was established May 1, 1758. The first catalogue is dated November 1, 1758. There were 109 subscribers at five shillings each, and 450 volumes. The centenary of this library was celebrated May 13, 1858. (*Ibid.* 5th Series, vol. VII, p. 354.) In January, 1761, Mr. Baker, book-seller of Tunbridge Wells, lost his circulating library by fire. By 1770 there were circulating libraries at Settle, Rochdale, Exeter, and doubtless other places. In *The Annual Register* (p. 207) for 1761 is an interesting note: "The reading female hires her novels from some country circulating library, which consists of about an hundred volumes," which might very well apply to Polly Honeycomb. (*Ibid.* 7th Series, vol. XII, p. 66.)

When Franklin came to London in 1725 there was not a single circulating library in the metropolis. See Franklin's *Autobiography* (vol. I, p. 64), and in 1697 the only library in London which approached the nature of a public library was that of Zion College, belonging to the London clergy (Ellis's *Letters of Literary Men*, p. 245). The exact date of the earliest London circulating library I have not yet ascertained; but according to Southey (*The Doctor*, ed. Warter, 1848, p. 271) the first set up in London was about the middle of the eighteenth century by Samuel Fancourt. (Buckle: *History of Civilization in England*, vol. I, p. 393.) Samuel Fancourt was a dissenting minister who went to London about 1730. A library conducted by him at a subscription of a guinea a year was dissolved, Michaelmas, 1745. Between 1746 and 1748 he issued an alphabetical catalogue of *Books and Pamphlets belonging to the Circulating Library in Crane Court*, in two volumes. In this "Gentlemen and Ladies' Growing and Circulating Library" the initial payment was a guinea and four shillings a year. A subscriber could draw one book and one pamphlet at a time. "He may keep them a reasonable time according to their bigness." This library contained between two and three thousand volumes, only about a tenth being light literature, and nearly half the total contents being on theology. (*Dictionary of National Biography*, under Faucourt.)

of the books have passed into the limbo of the forgotten, if, indeed, they ever existed. Polly gets her books from a circulating library in London, or purchases them from the bookseller, and she keeps up with the new books as they come out, but she does not mention any of the books in Colman's list. *The History of Sir George Truman and Emilia, The British Amazon, The Adventures of Tom Ramble, The History of Dick Carless, History of Amelia,* are the only novels she speaks of by the title. Her familiarity with novels in general is such that she merely refers to the characters in an offhand fashion. Nurse indicates the scope of Polly's reading in "Yes, yes, you are always reading your simple story-books. The *Ventures* of Jack this, the history of Betsey t'other, and Sir Humphreys, and women with hard Christian names."[1] But Polly merely refers to Clarinda and to Julia, to Betsey Thompson, to Sally Wilkins, as girls who eloped because they had obstinate, ill-natured parents; to Bob Lovelace as a writer of charming letters; to poor Clarissa and ugly Mr. Soames; to Nancy Howe and Mr. Hickman; to poor Sophy Western as one locked up by an irate father; to Tom Jones, a foundling and yet a gentleman's son. She means to marry Scribble, though they "go through as many distresses as Booth and Amelia." She belabors Mr. Ledger with "I hate you; you are as deceitful as Blifil, as rude as the Harlowes, and as ugly as Dr. Slop." After she has assailed this unwelcome suitor from Change-alley with "You are a vile book of Arithmetick, a table of pounds, shillings, and pence; you are uglier than a figure of eight, and more tiresome than the multiplication-table," she rejoices over her successful vituperation. "Ha, ha, ha! there he goes! ha, ha, ha! I have out-topped them all; Miss Howe, Narcissa, Clarinda, Polly Barnes, Sophy Willis, and all of them. None of them ever treated an odious fellow with so much spirit. This would make an excellent chapter in a new Novel. But here comes papa; in a violent passion, no doubt. No matter: It will only furnish materials for the next chapter."

[1] *The Adventures of Jack Smart* and *The History of Miss Betsey Thoughtless* are in Colman's list.

Though it is apparent that Polly was reading Richardson and Fielding, yet the book that held temporary ascendancy over her imagination was *Sir George Truman.* By a clever device she is introduced reading the book and giving lively comments thereon:

Polly. Well said, Sir George! Oh, the dear man. But so — "With these words the enraptur'd baronet [*reading*] concluded his declaration of love." — So! — "But what heart can imagine, [*reading*] What tongue describe, or what pen delineate, the amiable confusion of Emilia?" — Well, now for it! — "Reader, if thou art a courtly reader, thou hast seen, at polite tables, iced cream crimsoned with raspberries; or, if thou art an uncourtly reader, thou hast seen the rosy-finger'd morning dawning in the golden East;" Dawning in the golden East! Very pretty. — "Thou hast seen, perhaps, [*reading*] the artificial vermilion on the cheeks of Cleora, or the vermilion of nature on those of Sylvia; thou hast seen — in a word, the lovely face of Emilia was overspread with blushes." This is a most beautiful passage, I protest! Well, a Novel for my money! — [*reading*] "Sir George touched at her confusion, gently seized her hand, and softly pressing it to his bosom [*acting it as she reads*] where the pulses of his heart beat quick, throbbing with tumultuous passion, in a plaintive tone of voice, breathed out, 'Will you not answer me, Emilia?'" Tender creature! — "She, half raising [*reading and acting*] her downcast eyes, and half inclining her averted head, said in faltering accents, — yes, Sir!" Well, now! — "Then, gradually recovering, with ineffable sweetness she prepared to address him: when Mrs. Jenkinson bounced into the room, threw down a set of china in her hurry, and strewed the floor with porcelain fragments: Then turning Emilia round and round, whirled her out of the apartment in an instant, and struck Sir George dumb with astonishment at her appearance. She raved; but the baronet resuming his accustomed effrontery . . ." Novels, Nursee, novels! [exclaims Polly.] A novel is the only thing to teach a girl life, and the way of the world, and elegant fancies, and love, to the end of the chapter! . . . Do you think, Nursee, I should have had such a good notion of love so early, if I had not read novels? . . . Oh, Nursee, a Novel is the only thing! . . . Lord, Nursee, if it was not for novels and love-letters a girl would have no use for her writing and reading.

It is from her precious novels that the energetic young Polly has a head so full of intrigues and contrivances. Rope-ladders or tied sheets and a feather-bed under the window, disguises,

letters in lemon-juice, ink concealed in a pin-cushion, and paper and pens in a fan, all the devices of a thwarted amour, are as the alphabet of intrigue to Polly. No wonder the cautious Mr. Ledger finally withdraws his suit. "She 'd make a terrible wife for a sober citizen. Who can answer for her behaviour? I would not underwrite her for ninety *per cent.*" Mr. Honeycomb attributes all Polly's vagaries to "these damn'd story-books," and concludes, "A man might as well turn his daughter loose in Covent-Garden, as trust the cultivation of her mind to A CIRCULATING LIBRARY."

Lydia Languish in Sheridan 's *Rivals* (1775) carries us beyond the limits of this study, but Lydia must be mentioned here because she brings this topic to a natural chronological close and because of her relationship to the characters already noted. Judged from the point of view of the books selected, Biddy, Marilla, and Arabella belong to the romance-readers, as opposed to Polly Honeycomb and Lydia Languish, the novel-readers. But the lists of Polly and Lydia are far from identical. Lydia is, indeed, quite up to date in her novels. Nine of the fifteen she mentions were first published between 1768 and 1773.[1] And her reading is much less sensational and trashy than that of Polly. The bustling, executive Polly cannot for a moment be considered the real ancestor of Lydia. It is on Biddy Tipkin that Lydia is more nearly modeled. The points of similarity between *The Tender Husband* and *The Rivals* have often been noted, and it is in the Biddy and Lydia portion that this kinship is closest.

[1] *The Reward of Constancy* (possibly Shebeare's *The Happy Pair; or, Virtue and Constancy rewarded*, 1771); *The Fatal Connexion*, by Mrs. Fogarty (1773); *The Mistakes of the Heart*, by Treyssac de Vergy (1769); *The Delicate Distress* (1769) and *The Gordian Knot* (1769), by Mrs. Griffith; *The Memoirs of Lady Woodford* (1771); *Peregrine Pickle*, by Smollett (1751); *Tears of Sensibility*, translated from French by John Murdock (1773); *Humphrey Clinker*, by Smollett (1771); *Sentimental Journey*, by Sterne (1768); *Roderick Random*, by Smollett (1748; eighth ed. 1770); *The Innocent Adultery* (translation of Scarron's *L'Adultère Innocente*, in 1722–29 and with later editions); *Lord Aimsworth* (1773); *The Man of Feeling*, by Mackenzie (1771). For full comment on these books, and the others in Lydia's list see *Major Dramas of Richard Brinsley Sheridan* (edited by George Henry Nettleton), Introduction, pp. lxviii–lxxvii.

Lydia with her two suitors and her aunt make up a group fundamentally like the one of which Biddy is the center, though, of course, Biddy's "Urganda of an aunt" is infinitely less amusing than "the old weather-beaten she-dragon," Mrs. Malaprop, and Numps and Captain Cleremont are but faint forerunners of Bob Acres and Captain Absolute. But the original conception, the general relationship of these characters, their function in the play, are much the same. Biddy and Lydia are alike in occasional details and almost identical as type characters. And Lydia as a heroine given over to mischievous reading is like the other heroines in arousing in the harassed guardian or parent numerous protests against romances and novels. Mrs. Malaprop and Sir Anthony Absolute sum up all that has been said in the earlier plays. Mrs. Malaprop would not have young women become "progenies" of learning, and her ideal maid who goes to school at nine to learn a "little ingenuity and artifice," "a supercilious knowledge of accounts," with a little geography and reading, pretty well represents the amount of education the ordinary young girl was getting. And Sir Anthony protests against the inevitable evils consequent on teaching girls to read:

> All this is the natural consequence of teaching girls to read. Had I a thousand daughters, by Heavens! I'd as soon have them taught the black art as their alphabet! . . . Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an evergreen tree, of diabolical knowledge . . . it blossoms through the year!

SUMMARY

Material not easily accessible

In any attempt to trace a single line of thought or a social tendency through a long and remote period the difficult accessibility of the material must be premised. It is disheartening to note how many of the desired facts lurk in corners and byways, and are come upon almost by chance. A stray allusion followed up may lead to some rich little pocket of information, while laboriously conducted explorations prove futile. It is the discovery of these pockets of ore that constitute the rewards of the adventure. But such satisfaction is constantly clouded by a sense of the pockets that have been missed. Whatever discoveries reward the investigator, there is always a tantalizing sense of having hardly more than passed the outlying boundaries of what might be found.

Along with sins of omission it is regrettably certain that there must be sins of commission. In individual instances the discovery of further material might result in a somewhat different evaluation of the literary or historic significance of the person concerned. And certain it is that fuller records would reveal force and charm in many a woman presented now by but a meager array of unsuggestive biographical facts.

A final difficulty results from a carelessness as to dates in contemporary records of the period studied, especially with regard to minor people, so that chronology is sometimes led into a dim and confused region of conjecture and approximation.

Women in literary biography

Omission of important persons, mistakes in emphasis, an occasional dubious chronology, are due in part to the general condition of literary biography till long after the middle of the eighteenth century. The details regarding men were often meager and inexact, but much more so was this the case with regard to women. When Ballard began the preliminary studies for his memoirs of learned ladies he

found the utmost difficulty in getting any reliable data. He refers to Leland, Bale, Pits, and Tanner as men whose works he had studied for general method. But from none of these could he get direct aid in his own field of research. Various records of Oxford and Cambridge could render but incidental service, Edward Philips's *Threatrum Poetarum* (1675); John Aubrey's *Brief Lives* (known as early as 1680); William Winstanley's *Lives of the most famous English Poets* (1687); Gildon's edition of Langbaine's *Dramatic Poets*, with a second volume on Poets in 1688, were somewhat more helpful. But in all these put together there were only a few pages devoted to women. John Shirley's *Illustrious History of Women* (1686) and Juncker's *Catalogue of Learned Women* (1692) have practically nothing to offer towards a history of learned English women. John Evelyn's *Numismata* (1697) gives a list of renowned persons "worthy the honour of *Medal*," in the course of which he mentions some instances of the "Learned, Virtuous and Fair Sex," beginning with Boadicea. Thirteen Englishwomen are in the list, but with only the briefest notice. Giles Jacob's *Poetical Register* (1724) goes more into detail, but in his two volumes there are only fifteen pages of female biography. Mrs. Cooper includes no woman in her *Muse's Library* (1737) and Hayward in his *The British Muse* (1738) makes but one quotation from a woman. John Wilford's *Memorials and Characters* (1741) was compiled with the idea of presenting examples of piety and virtue. Of the eighty-one women noted only a few come within the category of learned women. Thomas Birch in his *Illustrious Persons of Great Britain* (1752) includes no women but Queens.

The meager gleanings from the best biographical records before 1752 put stronger emphasis on the importance of George Ballard's *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* as a book of original research, and as the first source of detailed and ordered, and, in general, accurate information concerning the learned women of England.[1]

Of later sources the first is Theophilus Cibber's *Lives of the*

[1] Page 354.

Poets (1753). Rather full accounts of fourteen women are given by Cibber, eight of them being names not included in Ballard's book.[1] The *Eminent Ladies* (1755) was but a weak compilation of poems with brief and perfunctory comment. In the *New and General Biographical Dictionary*, published in 1761, the most imposing biographical work of the period, out of more than five thousand names less than twenty English women of letters are listed.

The first book after Ballard to take up female biography exclusively appeared in 1766 and is entitled: *Biographium Femineum. The Female Worthies: or, Memoirs of the Most Illustrious Ladies of all Ages and Nations, who have been Eminently distinguished for their Magnanimity, Learning, Genius, Virtue, Piety, and other excellent Endowments, conspicuous in all the various Stations and Relations of Life, public and private. Containing (exclusive of Foreigners) The Lives of above Fourscore British Ladies, who have shone with a peculiar Lustre, and given the noblest proofs of the most exalted Genius, and Superior Worth. Collected from History, and the most approved Biographers, and brought down to the present Times* (1766). This book is based on Ballard, Cibber, and *Eminent Ladies*, but also, unfortunately, accepts Amory as an authority.

In 1779 William Alexander published *The History of Women*,

[1] The new names are Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Manley, Mrs. Centlivre, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Cockburn, Mrs. Pilkington, and Miss Chandler. Ballard (p. vii) gives a list of the ladies who had a reputation for learning, but concerning whom he could get no information. The list is as follows: "Lady Mary Nevil, Lady Anne Southwell, Lady Honor Hay, Lady Mary Wroath, Lady Armyn, Lady Ranelagh, Lady Anne Boynton (famous for her skill in ancient coins, and noble collection of them), Lady Levet, Lady Warner. Gentlewomen: Mrs. Mabilla Vaughan, Mrs. Elizabeth Grimstone, Mrs. Jane Owen, Mrs. M. Croft, Mrs. Emilia Lanyer, Mrs. Makins (who corresponded in the learned languages with Mrs. Maria à Schurman), Mrs. Gertrude More, Mrs. Dorothy Leigh." None of Cibber's additions appear in this list. Apparently Ballard's omission of writers of comedy and fiction would indicate that he did not count them among the learned. The omission of Mrs. Cockburn is less explicable. The five *Lives* given by both Ballard and Cibber are of the Duchess of Newcastle, Anne Killigrew, Lady Chudleigh, Mrs. Monk, Lady Winchilsea, and Mrs. Grierson.

in two volumes. Mr. Alexander has comparatively little to say about learned women. He wrote, he said, to "amuse and instruct the Fair Sex," hoping thus to lure them from poring over novels and romances. He avoided technical and foreign terms and all citation of authorities as being "perplexing to the sex," and while his book professes to be a sort of propagandist tract for female education, he so abhors female pendantry and so laments fair eyes dimmed by severe and intense study that his book is a distinct reaction from the dignified earlier ideals. Dr. Johnson admits no women into the society of his fifty-two *English Poets* (1779–81). The *Biographia Britannica* (1778–93) includes Mary Beale and ten literary women. All of these except Mrs. Delany had appeared in Ballard or Cibber. Mary Hays's *Female Biography*, published in England in 1803 and in America in 1807, in three volumes, includes celebrated women in "all Ages and Countries." It is based on Ballard and the other authorities already indicated. The uncritical character of the book is indicated by the remark of Miss Hays, "My book is intended for women and not for scholars." Robert Southey, in 1809, in his *Specimens of the Later English Poets*, begins with the time of James II. Out of two hundred and twenty-three poets represented, seventeen are women. In the thirty-two volumes of Chalmers's *General Biographical Dictionary* (1812) about thirty English learned ladies are briefly noted. In Campbell's *British Poets* (1819) there is but one woman, Katherine Philips, among the one hundred and seventy names he gives. Alexander Dyce, in *Specimens of British Poetesses*, in 1827, gives brief extracts in chronological order from eighty-three authors, but with only the slightest possible apparatus of notes and dates. The purpose of Mr. Dyce was to exhibit the progress of English women in poetry, and his book was planned and partly executed before he happened upon the *Eminent Ladies*, a reprint of which appeared about 1780. On a perusal of that book he found it so unimportant a precursor as not to interfere with his plan. Over half of Mr. Dyce's work is given to women after 1750. Of the forty-nine before that period, beginning with Juliana Berners

and ending with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, very few are represented by more than two or three pages of quotation. Lady Winchilsea, owing doubtless to Wordsworth's recent eulogy of her, is given eleven pages. Mr. Dyce did considerable independent research, for he quoted from a good many poems by women not mentioned by previous authors. Wordsworth had planned a similar work and had made extracts for it, "lucid crystals," he says, "culled from a Parnassian Cave seldom trod."

About the middle of the nineteenth century various books, such as Miss Costello's *Memoirs of Eminent Englishwomen* (1844), Mrs. Hale's *Woman's Record* (1853), Jane Williams's *Literary Women of England* (1861), Julia Kavanagh's *English Women of Letters* (1863), with other compilations treating especially of late eighteenth-century fiction but recognizing also the works of Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Manley, and Mrs. Haywood, seemed to indicate a recrudescence of interest in the work of women. But in most of these books the treatment is so vague and popular as to be of little use.

Of more value than formal condensed statements in biographical compilations are autobiographies, letters, contemporary allusions, works in prose and verse, prefaces, and early individual biographies. Thanks to a steadily growing interest in the period 1660 to 1800, there has been an accumulation during recent years of special critical editions of early works, of manuscripts published after long years of oblivion, and of reprints of valuable productions. It is in particular to this class of material that the student must go in an attempt to evolve personalities from scattered facts.

The term "learned" as applied to women demands careful chronological definition. It would be used today, without any strong bias of approval or disapproval, to describe a woman who in some reputable realm of learning has a competent apparatus of the facts involved, and a mind trained to order and interpret these facts. Such intellectual activity would be differentiated from creative work in poetry, fiction, and drama. But the phrase "learned women"

The term "learned"

as used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had no such specialized application. The contemporary defenders of "The Excellency of the Female Sex" give the widest and loosest possible meaning to the term. It sometimes stood for the most solid attainments, but it was also made to cover very rudimentary intellectual strivings. An avowed taste for reading, the faintest interest in physical phenomena, the composition of slight little poems, the writing-out of prayers and meditations, even the copying of extracts into a common-place book, could, in applause or derision, be counted as learned occupations. This wide inclusiveness results inevitably in the practical breaking-down of any set of qualities as necessarily connoted by the term "learned."

Equally undiscriminating was the use of examples whereby to establish the possible mentality of women. History and tradition were of equal authority, the Muses and Sibyls counting as much as the great names of later days. The uncritical lists of learned ladies record as of apparently equal importance the "physical fancies" of the Duchess of Newcastle and the exact botanical knowledge of Elizabeth Blackwell; the playful coquetting with foreign tongues by some society ladies and the close linguistic attainments of Miss Elstob or Mrs. Collyer; the wide sweep of general information of Mrs. Delany and the minute investigation into the field of early English by Mrs. Cooper.

A similar ill-defined use of the term "learned" is inevitable in the present attempt to estimate the intellectual tendencies of the seventeenth and eighteenth century women. In the evaluation of the work of individual women as their names arise critical standards can be given due weight. But in general it is not the object of this study to test the scholastic, scientific, or literary work of the women of the period by modern academic ideas of excellence. The purpose here is rather to show the number of women whose interests were intellectual, whose chosen pursuits had to do with books and things of the mind, and who were demanding a new freedom of self-expression, new training, and new opportunities.

Still another preliminary statement seems necessary. The period from 1650 to 1760 is a rich and crowded one. Even when regarded from a single comparatively barren point of view such as an account of learned women, it offers too much material for a single volume. To keep at all within limits it is necessary to hold the presentation of each learned woman merely to those points in her life and work that have to do with her as an exponent of new ideals for women, or as marking by her own achievements new feminine possibilities in the arts, in learning, or in letters. Complete presentation would involve almost a separate volume for each important woman. Many of the women here studied offer interesting subjects for further investigation. A new insight into the religious, the social, and the domestic life of the period would be given by full biographies of such women as Anne Killigrew, Lady Winchilsea, Bathsua Makin, Mrs. Cooper, and indeed of many others. Such studies would be invaluable as a contribution to the history of the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century.

Periods in intellectual progress of women

A retrospect of the progress of the intellectual freedom and the systematic education of women in England does not reveal an orderly acceleration from period to period. There are, instead, periods of activity followed by periods of quiescence. Two such periods, one of activity, one of quiescence, may be noted before the Restoration.

The reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth have been called the golden age for learned women,[1] and even a cursory glance over these years serves to justify that reputation. Theoretical statements by distinguished foreigners such as that by Castiglione; the opinions of such men as Vives and Hyrde, of Mulcaster, Ascham, Udall, and Erasmus; the example of the royal family and many great nobles in securing the most learned instruction for their daughters; the influence of at least two learned queens, Catherine of Aragon and Elizabeth; the actual scholarship of many distinguished women; the warm praise of this scholarship

[1] Pages 4–23.

by the most eminent men, made up a general atmosphere strongly stimulating to learned attainment by women. Individual opportunities of so high a character, and a reception so genial and even eager towards the intellectual activity of women did not again recur in England. But this golden age remains as hardly more than a brilliant picture; it has practically no important place in the progress of the education of women. The advantages given to women were nullified, so far as initiating more widespread activities is concerned, by two inherent defects. The learning of women had no legitimate purpose or outcome beyond the home. It was the object of adulation and flattery, but it seldom came into competition with the work of men where it could be judged on its merits. It had always a small audience favorably disposed in advance. Learning was a kind of high-class individual accomplishment purely for home consumption. A second defect was that learning belonged only to the daughters of the nobility or of the very rich. Even within these bounds it was sporadic, depending entirely on the opinion of the head of the family.

A gradual decline of interest in scholarship as an appropriate pursuit for damsels of high lineage was apparent even in Elizabethan days, and the change from Tudor ideals became marked in the period from the death of Elizabeth to the Restoration.[1] James looked upon women with contempt. Queen Anne's mother, Sophia of Mecklenburg, was a highly gifted woman who, after her retirement from public life, devoted her leisure to astronomy, chemistry, and other sciences. But Anne had none of her mother's intellectual interests. She cared only for fine dresses and jewels, progresses and masks, and gay frivolous entertainments.[2] So she brought no literary ideals or ambitions to counteract the king's cold indifference to education in general. Under Charles I and Henrietta Maria there might readily have arisen in a new and lighter form some educational ideals or

[1] Pages 23–37.

[2] Strickland, Agnes: *Lives of the Queens of England*, under "Anne of Denmark."

schemes favorable to women, for the King loved music and painting and had well-developed literary tastes, and the Queen had great respect for the French salons of her day and was interested in the general ideas of the *précieuses*. But the troubled times of the Civil War turned the minds of both men and women to sterner tasks. And it is perhaps not strange that this period proves the most barren one in English history so far as the education of girls is concerned.

At the Restoration we enter upon a new era of feminine activity. The beginnings of this era do not, however, coincide sharply with 1660, but belong at least a decade earlier. The chief women writing and studying between 1650 and 1675,[1] the Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. Philips, Mary North, Dorothy Osborne, Margaret Blagge, Lady Pakington, the Countess of Warwick, Mrs. Hutchinson, and Lady Fanshawe, brilliantly ushered in this new period. With the coming of peace and national security women were apparently conscious not only of a new freedom, but of a new power and a new demand for some form of personal expression. After the unusual services rendered by them in war-times they could not settle down at once into the tame concerns of peace. This does not refer particularly to the women counted the heroines of the Civil War. It refers rather to the general emotional excitement and freeing of the spirit consequent on war activities. There was on the part of women a blind and unfocused but persistent and stimulating sense that larger and more varied opportunities were awaiting them. Latent powers had been stirred into self-consciousness and could not again be lulled into the old quiescence.

It was not only the inevitable burdens and responsibilities of war that had stirred women to new life. They could not fail to share in the new sense of personal importance and power that came to the people as a whole in their victorious struggle with autocracy. But it must be observed that along with this consciousness of national and political self-realization there was, under the Puritans, stern repression in matters of social and

[1] Pages 46–81.

religious life. At the coming of Charles, however, all this was changed. With disastrous suddenness people found themselves free to follow with all gayety of spirit wherever their pleasure-loving instincts led. That such breaking of bonds resulted in an almost incredible outburst of immorality should not be allowed to obscure the fact that there was also a remarkable freeing of the mind from conventional standards. For good or for evil the individual found himself free to give energetic expression to his individual tendencies. By this freedom, by this license, women as well as men were profoundly moved.

The new impulses thus brought into being did not, however, give rise to anything like orderly and progressive activity on the part of women. The century following 1660 is seen to be an inchoate assemblage of beginnings. It is rich with a promise that comes to no decisive result. The path, instead of leading to some well-marked fortress or to some mount of vision, loses itself in unmeaning meanders.

There is, indeed, after the middle of the eighteenth century, even an appearance of retrogression in the attention devoted to learned pursuits for women. It is not till the end of that century that the movement acquires new momentum. Until we come to Catharine Macaulay, the novelists in the last quarter of the century, and Mary Wollstonecraft at its end, we have little that is new in theory or striking in achievement. From 1760 to 1775 no new woman writer of distinction appears. On ideals of education and conduct, Dr. James Fordyce, Mrs. Barbauld, and Mrs. Chapone, the recognized arbiters, are tame compilers of bromidic maxims with little of the dignity and spirit of the best writers on feminism six or seven decades earlier. The actual accomplishment of the period before 1760 was a destruction of old placidities, a restlessness of discussion, rather than a movement reaching definite achievement. But this discussion and the many individual examples of literary or learned accomplishment on the part of women were together slowly having their collective effect. Finally salons came and gave social prestige to the women who could think and talk brilliantly, and

gave a tremendous impetus, if not to actual learning, yet to the idea that a woman should have sense, intelligence, a wide knowledge of books, and an understanding of history and current affairs.

From Catharine Macaulay to about the time of Tennyson's *Princess* is a period possessing considerable unity and one that would reward minute study. Such an investigation would bring us close to the establishment of great schools for the higher education of women and their consequent entrance upon a new era, an era that should look back with astonishment and respect to such ancestors as Anna van Schurman, Bathsua Makin, Dr. Hickes, and Mary Astell.

The learned woman and a public

One of the most promising characteristics of the work of women is the emergence of learning from the aristocratic seclusion of the "golden age." In Tudor times it was in courtly circles only that learning was counted appropriate for women. Elizabeth Lucar stands as a solitary record of a lady from the wealthy middle class whose accomplishments were similar to those in the palaces of the great. But a significant change is to be noted in the century initiated about 1660. Duchesses and countesses are listed with wives and daughters of the clergy, of rich merchants, of needy tradesmen. From the Duchess of Newcastle to Mary Leapor, the gardener's daughter, the roll shows that aristocratic restrictions are no longer in full force in the realm of letters. In intimate connection with this change is the fact that authorship is no longer a private, home affair. The days when Margaret Roper was praised because she found her father and husband a sufficient audience had passed forever. The work of women was no longer a carefully tended flower of the hot-house. It must grow in the open. To be sure, women hesitated to publish. The Orindas and Astræas and Philomelas and Ardelias, whom Richardson derides as "the lovely dastards" of the sex, show how women sought protecting pseudonyms. But publish they did. They craved readers. The applauding males of their households were no longer adequate. Under the spell of a thou-

sand traditional timidities and reluctancies they yet desired to see their words on the printed page, and they secretly coveted a public.

Furthermore, women were thinking of authorship as a tool and as a weapon, not merely as a private resource. Mrs. Behn, the first English woman to write definitely for money, was but the precursor of various women in succeeding years who came to regard the products of their minds as of pecuniary significance. Especially is this true towards the end of the period. When we find Mrs. Haywood and Mrs. Manley writing fiction of a sort that will sell, Mrs. Blackwell doing superb botanical work in order to pay the fine imposed on her husband, or Mrs. Collyer writing that she may supplement a meager income and educate her children, we may not have come upon great art or literature, but we have come upon a new idea for women, the possible economic value of their work. It was not an idea that reached any but the most meager fruition, but at least the seed of a new thought was sown.

A third change was a respect for literature as a weapon, sometimes of offense, but mainly of defense and propaganda. The women who had ideals to promulgate, causes to urge upon the indifferent, or evils to be meliorated, found that talking at home was weak and futile. They must secure a public, and so the pamphlets poured forth. In fact, the fundamental difference between the golden age of the Tudors and the much less agreeable period for learned women after the Restoration was this matter of a public. Learning for home consumption only and as an elegant resource was sterile. However feeble intrinsically, learning and letters used for a purpose and submitted to a public had within it the seeds of vitality and the promise of a future.

Large number of intellectual women

Of greater significance still is the large number of women who gave themselves to intellectual pursuits. From Mrs. Philips to Mrs. Collyer the roll is impressively long. Macaulay's statement concerning the illiteracy of the women of the period may have some justi-

fication, but the exceptions are so numerous as almost to disprove the rule. And all the way down the line there is the suggestion that many other women of like tastes and attainments have been lost in obscurity. Many extant productions have been preserved only by chance. Dorothy Osborne's letters, the biographies by Mrs. Hutchinson and Lady Fanshawe, Celia Fiennes's travels, Lady Winchilsea's grand folio, to name but a few, escaped destruction mainly through the undisturbed continuity of the family life, and possibly the inertia, of their possessors. And where a few manuscripts have been saved, many more have doubtless been destroyed. The loss to learning and letters is probably slight. But in estimating the strength of a tendency the numbers who were affected by it count as important testimony. Every woman whose mind was alert, demanding intellectual sustenance, and struggling towards self-expression, adds a further fraction of proof as to the vitality of the new impulse. And, while not susceptible of absolute verification, the general tantalizing consciousness of many shadowy presences of women whose ideas and efforts never reached the printed page is a not unimportant factor in one's personal conviction as to the very large number of women who were affected by the new unrest and the new aspiration hidden away under the ordinary routine of thought and work. But even without any such shadowy presences the list is long enough to be convincing.

Types of work but scantily represented

In an attempt to tabulate the variety of ways in which women sought self-expression, we note first those fields of endeavor in which their work was but scantily represented. In some cases these areas of restricted productivity are characteristic of the age in general, in some cases, the outcome of limitations imposed on women in particular.

One type of the woman interested in letters becomes practically non-existent in the period under discussion, and that is the patroness whose rank and wealth and intellectual tastes summoned about her a brilliant coterie of poets and men of science

to whom she extended substantial aid. The patroness plays no important part in English life after Elizabethan times. Lady Bedford is the last noted representative. Mary North's little circle of literary ladies, and the Matchless Orinda's "Circle of Friendship" are coteries, but without a Lady Bountiful as the center. Lady Pakington comes nearer the type in her assemblage of Church of England divines. But on the whole the patroness and salon are not revived till the time of the *bas bleus* in the mid-eighteenth century, and then only in a modified form.

In the fine arts the attainments of women were slight and amateurish. Mary Beale was the only portrait-painter of distinction, and in landscape-painting no woman is represented by valuable canvases. But the same state of affairs held true of English men. With the solitary exception of Mr. Riley all of the noted portrait-painters in England before 1760 were foreigners. The landscape artists, too, were foreigners, or were mere copiers of the Italian or Flemish masters. So the deficiency of women in the fine arts may justly be counted but a part of the general national deficiency. The immediate and permanent success of women on the stage has been sufficiently emphasized. But it should also be noted that acting was a career necessarily limited to a comparatively small number of women.

Many kinds of work more or less professional in character were but slightly represented. Except for governesses in great families and the mistresses of boarding-schools for girls there were no women teachers, hence teaching as an ultimate goal was eliminated as a determining factor in the kind of intellectual work pursued. Even the governesses were not chosen for scholarship, but for character and good-breeding. They had to do only with little children, and had no need for learning. And the school-mistresses secured outside masters for the various studies and accomplishments, confining their own work to morals and general management.

Women had so long had home medicaments to make and administer, the mistress of a great estate had so long been the sole resort in matters concerning the health of her dependents, that

we might expect medicine to be one of the first important new fields conquered by women, but such was not the case. The Duchess of Newcastle, to be sure, gave her fancy free rein in the wide fields of anatomy and physiology. But besides such young women as Elizabeth Bury, renowned for her knowledge of simples and her skill in diagnosis, and Jane Barker who followed her brother's lead in reading medical works, there are no English women on record before 1760 as having given themselves with any serious interest to the study of medicine. The only possible exception would be in midwifery. In this department of medical or surgical practice women had the matter almost in their own hands. Mrs. Pilkington says that her father, Dr. Van Lewen, was the first man midwife in England. There must, then, have been developed among women considerable knowledge and practical skill. But their work was in no sense of professional rank. There was no definite training required, there was no way of applying standardized tests of excellence, and there was no organization among the women themselves. And almost no women attempted to put into book form the results of their experience. Mrs. Jane Sharp's *The Midwives' Book* (1671) is a solitary exception. Mrs. Cellier's book advocating the maintenance of a "Corporation of Skilful Midwives" is the only suggestion I have found looking towards professional training and recognition such as nurses now receive.

In housekeeping matters women were also in the main content to do the work without any formal statements of the mysteries of their art. There was much passing about of receipts for cookery, for toilet preparations, for curative drinks and salves, but when these were collected and published, it was usually the work of some enterprising book-seller. Mrs. Hannah Woolley, Mrs. "A. M.," and Mrs. Hannah Glasse, are the only women I have come upon who could even in the faintest way foreshadow the great mass of present-day writing on questions of domestic science.

Although the satire in some of the comedies would indicate that women were manifesting some interest in the new discov-

eries through the telescope and the microscope, and were sometimes giving themselves to laboratory experiments in dissection, there is no serious record of any real research in science by women. Even Mrs. Blackwell's exquisite and accurate botanical work is an artistic rather than a scientific achievement so far as she herself is concerned. Her botanical facts were not entirely the result of personal investigation.

To be "the breeders of children in their low age" had always been so unquestionably the province of women that they would supposedly be past-masters in that art, and it might be expected that they would use the first freedom of their pen to write such things as would suit the tastes and needs of children. Again, such is not the case. But it must be recognized that there was nowhere any catering to the literary needs of children. Bunyan's *Book for Boys and Girls* (1680), Mason's *Little Catechism* (1693), Watts's *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* (1720) represent a few attempts to render religious truth more palatable to the child's mind, but real literature for children did not begin till 1744. Mr. Newberry's *Little Pretty Pocket Book* of that year initiated a kind of literature the vast extent of which can now hardly be estimated. And in the earliest period of literature for children Mrs. Collyer's *Christmas Box* and Miss Fielding's *Little Female Academy*, both in 1749, must take an honorable place.

One more kind of work for which women have manifested exceptional ability in modern times is in the conduct of humanitarian enterprises. Traditionally they were the loaf-givers. The new thing was to organize generosity into permanent efficiency and to make it operative beyond the limits of the family estate. Mrs. Bovey and Lady Elizabeth Hastings are early instances of women devoting time, mentality, and money to the development of systematic benevolence. But there were few women whose economic independence and sense of civic responsibility were so happily united.

Still another realm in which women to-day are finding large opportunity was practically closed to the women of earlier

times, and that is public speaking. Except among the Quakers no woman spoke, on any subject whatsoever, before an audience. She might sing or she might act with applause. But talking was outside her bounds. Acting was but repeating the words of others; singing was a gift of the gods; but talking to an audience, whether to delight or instruct, carried plain implications of self-conscious superiority in knowledge or power. It was incredibly unfeminine and not to be endured. On this topic the authority of St. Paul was still unquestioned.

If from the women who are to-day preparing for some sort of professional work, we should exclude all who expect to teach, all who are planning to enter upon some sort of scientific research, all who are training themselves for public speaking, all who are preparing for the effective management of large enterprises, all who are writing on domestic or medical matters, the scope of feminine activity would be almost unbelievably narrowed. These various kinds of work are now recognized channels through which whatever ability a woman may have may find expression. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries if a woman had a good mind and felt impelled to use it, none of these avenues were normally open to her. It is difficult to imagine what the withdrawal of all these opportunities would mean in the reduction of adequate stimuli to good work. Hence the few women who did pioneer work in these various departments must have been moved by some strong urgency of the spirit. They were adventurers lured by the fascination of the new and the untried, and their effort is significant even when the region they conquered proved to be but the barren edge of a great continent.

It was in writing that women were least hampered, and, as has been stated, it was in writing that we find their work most varied and abundant.

Women playwrights

As playwrights they were especially successful in comedy. Mrs. Behn and Mrs. Centlivre take a very creditable rank in the comedy of lively intrigue and social satire. Tragedy appealed to more women writers than did

comedy, but they were less successful in that realm. Tragedy was considered so inherently virtuous that the most high-minded could find in it edification, and young girls who were forbidden attendance on comedies were freely allowed to witness tragedies. For this reason women writers with dramatic aspirations, but to whom the license of the comedy was distasteful, applied themselves to tragedy. That Catherine Cockburn's *Fatal Friendship* should be counted the best of these tragedies is perhaps a sufficient condemnation of the entire series. But it must be again remembered that it was not an age in which any writers excelled in tragedy. The heroic plays of Dryden, the domestic tragedy of Otway, and here and there a play of some contemporary vogue, such as Ambrose Philips's *Distressed Mother* and Addison's *Cato*, practically make up the list. Of the tragedies recorded by Genest between 1660 and 1760 very few of those having any but the most ephemeral success are by contemporary authors. Hence the failure of women in this realm is in accordance with the trend of the times.

Fiction

Novels did not come into existence till so late in the period under discussion that we have little chance to test women in this field which later proved to be peculiarly their own. Mrs. Behn's romances, with their realistic detail, their high-wrought emotions, scenic setting, and didactic intent, gave early examples of what might be done. But it is not till after Richardson that women had conspicuous success in works of fiction. After Mrs. Behn and before 1760 we have only the scandalous annals of Mrs. Manley and Mrs. Haywood, Miss Barker's inchoate autobiographic tales, Mrs. Lennox's satiric novel, and the didactic stories of Mrs. Collyer and Miss Fielding.

Poetry

In an age when facile versifying was counted a gentleman's accomplishment, and when the heroic couplet offered a form in which mechanical precision could be tested by the rule of the thumb, it would be strange if women with some literary knack did not write poetry. And it is true that nearly every woman who wielded a pen trained it

sometimes into the conventional pindarics or heroics. But on the whole, with most women writers poetry was but an occasional resource. It was not their chosen *métier*. There were, in fact, but two women, Mrs. Philips and Lady Winchilsea, who took their stand on poetry as their life's achievement. Orinda had grace, tenderness, and fine feeling. Ardelia had subtlety of intuition, a delicate independence of taste, and an occasional high excellence of form and phrase. By these qualities these two women are marked off from the poetasters of their day and have some permanent importance. But the mass of verse by women was undistinguished. It offers, however, some interesting general characteristics.

Compared to the total amount of verse by women, religious verse takes an unexpectedly small place. In no case that I can recall were a woman's religious poems her best work. The most popular as well as the most turgid and commonplace sort of religious writing was the Scripture paraphrase. Poems of pure devotion, of prayer and of praise, are less often found. In such as do occur we might expect the personal note, something winged and lyrical. But they are disappointingly timid and imitative. We have various proofs that there was no absolute lack of poignant spiritual conflict and endeavor during this period, but religious emotion was apparently so accustomed to decorous forms that it could not be driven into the nakedness of soul consequent upon religious abasement or ecstasy. The best religious verse of the period avoids strong emotions. It consists of gentle moralizing touched by personal feeling. There is a note of genuineness in the emphasis on fortitude, on self-control and self-abnegation, and on melancholy endurance. But the most that can be said for the religious poetry by women is that it was about on a par with contemporary religious poetry by men. It was an age of strong church affiliations and of theological discussion, but it was not an age that invited the expression of fervent religious emotion.

There is also little genuine love poetry. There is much that is friendly and affectionate, but almost nothing that is impas-

sioned. This, however, is a negation applicable to all verse of the period. Few memorable love lyrics are to be found in English verse between Waller's *Go, lovely rose*, and the songs of Robert Burns. But women had been so long emancipated from reason and traditionally given over to the feelings that love poetry, at least of the sentimental variety, might have been thought their natural output. As a matter of fact, the case was quite otherwise. The poetry by women had not, in general, what would be termed a feminine tone. Women do not seem to have given their instincts free play when they took up the poetical quill. Poetry was either a trifling temporary resource or it was a serious, even solemn affair, and must concern itself with weighty matters of vice and virtue. The style in poetry is consequently much less effective than in prose. There is almost nowhere through all the mass of this verse any brightness of fancy, any playfulness of wit, any mollifying sense of humor. There is little lightness of touch, there are few felicities and unforgettable lines. And there is more of scorn, indignation, and didacticism than of sweetness and light.

Autobiography and letters

In various departments of prose women writers reached an excellence considerably above the general prose average of the time. This is especially true in certain rather new branches of writing. The fragments of autobiography that have come down to us are almost without exception fresh, unpretentious, and delightful pieces of work. The records given us by the Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. Hutchinson, Miss Barker, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Elizabeth Elstob, and others, simply whet the appetite for more. If Anne Killigrew and Anne Kingsmill and Bathsua Pell and Lady Elizabeth Hastings, and very many other ladies, had left similar records we should have a legacy of simple, straightforward, and individual prose worth reams of pindarics or theological discussions. The intimate personal appeal of the subject-matter seemed to make for a picturesqueness and homely vigor of style. The only women who wrote biography — the Duchess of Newcastle, Lady Fanshawe, and Mrs. Hutchinson — wrote about

their husbands, so they were, in reality, carrying on the autobiographical element. And their success is perhaps due to an intimate knowledge of the facts, and a strong personal interest such as had animated the sketches of their own childhood. At any rate, these three *Lives* rank in interest with Evelyn's *Mrs. Godolphin* and Roger North's *Lives of the Norths*. Letters belong in the same general realm, and offer some of the most entertaining writing of the period. There are many reasons for thinking that letter-writing was a more general feminine resource than existing records would indicate. Such letters as are now extant have been preserved almost by accident. They were not counted of contemporary importance and very few of them reached publication before the nineteenth century. Yet the list is fairly representative.

We have the letters of Margaret Blagge to Mr. Godolphin; those of the Osborne ladies, Dorothy, Martha, and Sarah; Orinda's epistles to Poliarchus; Mrs. Evelyn's letters to her son's tutor; Mrs. Rowe's to the Duchess of Somerset; Mrs. Delany's to numerous friends; Miss Talbot's to Miss Carter; Miss Carter's to a host of correspondents; Mrs. Cockburn's to her lovers and to her niece; and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's records from many lands as well as her early letters to Mr. Montagu. As a body of documentary material these letters are invaluable. And they are interesting reading. The keen eye for dress and customs would have qualified some of these ladies for the novel of manners. There are pungent character sketches and witty comment on social foibles. These letters show often a humor and gayety of spirit such as find entrance into no other forms of feminine writing. And the style is almost uniformly easy and natural. Dorothy Osborne's objection to stilted and pedantic letters could have been applicable to few women letter-writers. They had no thought of a public and so escaped the snare of professionalism in tone. The letters contain records of love and of grief, of moments of vivid emotion, of deep spiritual experience, of friendships and of hatreds, of hopes and despairs, and because

all these came from the mind and the heart of the writer they are told in a convincing manner.

Another similar realm is that of travels. When women went on tours they saw everything that was to be seen. And they set down the details with infinite patience. Celia Fiennes has no literary style at all, but no other description of England between 1650 and 1760 contains so much detail worth remembering. She was the most spirited and indefatigable of travelers, and this intensity of interest found its way into her book and communicates itself to the reader. Had she kept her diary with any remotest thought of publication she might have been more lucid, but she might also have been less vigorous, individual, and picturesque. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Letters* created a sensation, as well they might, for as a writer of travels she out-distanced all competitors.

Travels

The kinds of prose writing so far indicated were all animated by personal experience and interest. That is certainly one secret of their charm. And it is to be observed that they are marked by qualities of observation and analysis later proved natural to women by their success in fiction. But there is another department of writing less naturally associated with women in which they were nevertheless conspicuous for merit, and that is some form of controversial writing.

When women espoused and defended a cause, it was with a heat of personal conviction that robbed them of self-consciousness and contributed to vigor and animation of style. Even earlier women, such as Anna van Schurman and Mrs. Makin, who felt that to be convincing they must show their ability to argue with the most rigid scholastic apparatus, now and then had passages of high-wrought feeling or indignation that burst the trammels of their logical form, and carry even to modern readers a sense of the intensity of conviction that moved the writer. Bathsua Pell's *Essay* in 1673 is an admirable piece of propagandist writing. No defender of higher education in the early days of women's colleges

Propaganda

was more pungent in attack, or tossed off the unmeaning arguments of opponents with more contemptuous ease. In writing on the higher education of women it is with the zeal of an enthusiast that Mary Astell marshals the details of her new scheme. She had thought her plan through to the end and she describes it with clearness and precision. Its noble possibilities give rise to seriousness and dignity of style. And when her mind is overborne by a recognition of the many foolish women and the scornful men who would render her ideals abortive, she is roused to passages of energetic satire. She is even acrimonious and vituperative. There is nothing soft or appealing or feminine about her work. If she convinces it will not be by the arts of her sex, but by argument and caustic attack. She does not entreat, she commands and instructs. The anonymous author of the *Defence* describes, with keen analysis, picturesque phrasing, and gay raillery, the beaux, the clodpate squires, the pedants, and the virtuosi of her day. Few contemporary satiric portraits are of more penetrating wit. "Sophia" of pamphlet fame carries on the successful propagandist writing. And Lady Winchilsea's one prose essay is indicative of her vigorous possibilities in speech when her ideas and feelings were involved. One point concerning the generally dignified tone of these essays in defense of women should be noted, and that is that they were not the outcome of personally bitter experiences or disappointments on the part of the authors. The writing was informed rather by a sense of high civic idealism and responsibility. Though the advancement of women is presented as a matter of justice, and of importance to women as individuals, the arguments always turn to a larger conception, and that is the service rendered to Society and the Church by educated women.

Religious experience and controversy

In religious controversy, also, women excelled. A practical or personal cause was not imperative. They wrote with equal vehemence, sincerity, and will to convince, when they were defending an abstract principle as when they were protesting against injustice,

or trying to further some specific reform. Lady Masham, Susanna Hopton, Mary Astell, and Mrs. Cockburn sufficiently illustrate the success of women as disputants. The fact that nearly all the topics on which these religious controversialists wrote are now dead issues, and that the writing has inevitably passed into oblivion along with the ideas it championed, should not be allowed to obscure the very evident contemporary respect accorded women as redoubtable antagonists and able advocates. There were also women who wrote little, such as Lady Pakington and Lady Conway, to whom the best men of the day gave high esteem for the soundness of their patristic and philosophical learning, and for the acuteness of their thinking.

Writers on personal religious experience or on hortatory subjects do not reach so high a grade of work. The prodigious industry of various compilers, annotators, and note-takers — the true Church of England "sermon-tasters" — such as Lady Brooke and Lady Halkett, is less indicative of learning than of a pronounced religious bias. And in prose, as in verse, the free and natural expression of spiritual experience was not characteristic of the age.

That more of this controversial and religious writing was not published can hardly be counted a loss to literature. Religious meditations quicken the inner life, and the effort to put religious emotions and beliefs into some literary form must contribute to a more active mentality, but the resultant printed page is not necessarily of permanent interest. The ardors and acrimonies, the labyrinthine twisting of arguments, the niceties of interpretation, the array of authorities, are all a leaden weight to the modern reader. And most meditations on virtues and vices are hardly more stimulating. But we cannot pass the great mass of these religious writings without noting what a new impression they give us of social England, especially in the second half of the seventeenth century. A student of Restoration comedy sees the court of England in its most frivolous and morally repellent aspect. But these women whose minds were so set on

religion were all members of the aristocracy. Margaret Blagge, Anne Killigrew, and Anne Kingsmill, women of the most sincere and ardent piety, were in intimate association with the courts of Charles II and James II. Lady Pakington, Lady Brooke, Lady Halkett, Lady Masham, Lady Russell, Mary Astell, Lady Elizabeth Hastings, and, later, Lady Huntington, were all by rank or especial opportunity in the highest and most exclusive social circles and so in contact with the profligacy of the court. Their extreme assiduity in all matters of religion, in church attendance, in private prayer, in meditation, in self-examination, in their austere moral standards, were a violent reaction from the evil life about them. In the homes and small social circles where their influence could be felt was being prepared a body of moral indignation, a desire for uprightness and purity of life, that gave to Jeremy Collier's attack on the stage in 1698 so overwhelming a response, and that was the sustaining force back of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

Work of women compared with contemporary work by men

The writing done by women between 1660 and 1760 is more impressive from its amount and variety than from any high excellence of its component parts. A mere calling of the great names of the period — Milton, Bunyan, Dryden, Swift, Pope, Addison, and Steele — is adequate to show that no woman of the time is comparable to these men in mental stamina and energy, or in deft literary manipulation. The dramatic work by women presents no such brilliant social satire as we find in Etherege and Wycherley, no wit so penetrating and sparkling as in Congreve's *Way of the World*, no humor so innocent and likable as in Steele's *Tender Husband*. In poetry Orinda and Ardelia make but a poor showing beside the giants of the day. There are no women writers on literary criticism even approaching the mastery of Dryden. There are no essayists with the light touch and social ease of Addison and Steele. There are no novelists to be ranked with Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding.

These rather damaging negations amount, however, in the

final analysis, only to a statement that among the comparatively small number of women writers no one reached the preeminence of the eight or ten most distinguished literary men. But the same statement could be made concerning the crowd of men striving for success in authorship. Of most men it could be said that their best endeavors left wide unconquered fields between them and the elect. It is, indeed, much to say of women that, untrained, with no stimulus of money or fame, a considerable number of them yet attained to an honorable place in writers of a class below the best, and that in some realms such as autobiography, biography, travels, and letter-writing, and in writing inspired by some social reform, some propaganda of religion or ethics, they rank among the best of their time. The same may be said of their work in pure scholarship. Miss Elstob, Miss Carter, and Mrs. Collyer, in their respective fields of Anglo-Saxon, Greek, and German, were exact and thorough beyond the demands of contemporary standards.

But even if there were not many successes to record, the great amount of work done by women would still carry its own sort of proof. In establishing the existence of a tendency it is not the single brilliant example, the genius, the persons of extraordinary ability, that count. It is rather the aims, ambitions, attempts, of many persons variously striving in the same general direction.

Comedy an embodiment of current opinion

The general seventeenth and eighteenth century opinion concerning learned women finds fairly complete statement in contemporary comedy. The persistence of the learned lady as a comic type serves incidentally as corroborative proof of the increasing attention given by women to learned pursuits, for no stage type remains amusing from year to year unless personages at least moderately correspondent to the type exist in sufficient numbers to count as a factor in social life. A basis of reality is necessary to give the type currency. But the comedy is more important as voicing a general critical estimate of values. A character does not hold its own as a comic type unless to the mass of

theater-goers it presents itself as out of focus with common sense. A moral or social judgment is implied. The laugh that followed Biddy Tipkin and Polly Honeycomb and Lydia Languish was a recognition of the absurdity involved in regulating real life by the rules of romance, and the underlying protest against too free access to fiction was quite in line with the diatribes of various grave moralists. So, too, with the learned lady. The comic character gained its point from the assumption on the part of the playwright and the audience that there was a fundamental incongruity between the lady and her learning. Learning did not belong to the lady, and when she assumed it she was thereby justly betrayed into all sorts of humiliations and absurdities. Back of every picture there was, consciously or unconsciously, the critical judgment. Learning and ladies do not coalesce. Either the lady abandons the learning or the learning spoils the lady.

There are two kinds of learned ladies represented in the comedy. In the case of young, lovely, and well-dowered girls, learning was but a foible. When convinced of its absurdity, these desirable maidens put aside their big folios and became the properly humble, adoring, and ignorant wives of the heroes whose sound good sense had shown them their folly. The unpleasanter elements of the comic portraits belong to dissatisfied wives whose souls were still bent on amorous adventure; to obsolescent ladies unwilling to confess the decay of their charms; to the old and the homely whom no bravery of attire and no battery of glances and graces could restore to the marriage market. To ladies of both classes Platonism is a name to conjure with. All physical manifestations of love are abhorrent to them. The mystic union of souls is as much as the truly refined can tolerate. To the young learned ladies this doctrine of austerity has at first a genuine appeal, but is quickly proved impracticable and fallacious. To the other ladies virtue is but a screen to mask their discredited charms.

The knowledge of the learned ladies is as spurious as their virtue. They profess an intimate knowledge of Latin and Greek,

and French seems their native tongue. They are at ease in the jargon of philosophical systems. They follow the telescope with the ardor of the Royal Society itself. Their studies are full of mathematical books and instruments. The scalpel and microscope lead them along the path of anatomical research. But in all this parade of learning there is no real scholarship. The ladies are pretentious and conceited, flaunting their false Latin and Greek before all comers, claiming to have explored the depths of knowledge when their short swallow-flights have scarcely brushed the surface.

The comedy may be said to embody the ordinary view as to the unsuitableness of learning for women. This implied critical negation is given a positive analogue in the actual training given to girls. Their early education was not neglected as is shown by the numbers of masters and tutors provided for the young daughters of good families. And from six to fourteen many girls were sent to the numerous boarding schools for young misses. But whether at home or in school the teaching included little more than deportment, accomplishments, and housewifery. These were what, in the language of Mr. Verney, would render a girl "considerable in the eyes of God and man." Hannah Wood's school was the most advanced of these minor schools for girls, and Sarah Fielding's *Little Female Academy* depicts the best that was done for younger girls. In any case education apparently ceased at fifteen or sixteen.

The schools provided for girls represent what it was in general thought that they needed. The comedy represents the absurdity of trying to pass these limits. Confirmatory of these views would be many private expressions by both men and women. There were, of course, hundreds of intelligent men to whom any change in the status of women seemed hostile to the best interests of society. And there were hundreds of women who flouted all thoughts of learning as essentially, eternally unfeminine. *The Spectator* records that at a certain period in the court of France it was counted a mark of ill-breeding to pronounce hard words right and that ladies not infrequently took occasion

to use such words "that they might show a Politeness in murdering them." And the diatribes in the English feminist pamphlets from Bathsua Makin to "Sophia" show how many women in high circles boasted of ignorance as one of their charms.

Advanced opinions of a minority

But we come to quite a different state of affairs when we consider the opinions of the progressive minority. The proposed schemes for higher education, although without immediate practical result, are notable indications of a new era of thought. Bathsua Makin's was the first formulated plan. But her effort to graft new fruit on the old stock resulted in a singular mixture. Her impassioned desire to induct girls into the excellencies of higher learning was hampered in various ways. She could not lessen the attention paid to the accomplishments; she could not venture to push the school age beyond sixteen; and she could not make her beloved linguistics compulsory. What she did accomplish was not in the establishment of an ordered system. It was rather the impress of her tastes and advanced ideas on the minds of individual pupils. The girls who went from the Tottenham High Cross School to various distinguished homes in England had no alarmingly fluent or exact knowledge of Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. But they had all at least been invited to look within the portals of the palace of learning and some had found it rich and alluring. To all had come a new conception of the learning possible to women. Mrs. Makin's court prestige, her reputation for prodigious scholastic attainments, her courage, originality, and independence, made her a dignified and an authoritative figure. It is a matter of regret that full annals of her school were not preserved.

The education proposed by Dr. Hickes in his remarkable sermon in 1683, ten years after Mrs. Makin established her school, was not analyzed into details. But when he suggested for women seminaries of learning similar to Oxford and Cambridge with only such changes in the instruction and the regimen as might be found advisable to fit them for their lives as

women, and when he urged rich and childless women to make their wealth serve humanity by founding such colleges for girls, he was too far ahead of his time to meet any immediate practical response, or even any opposition.

The next plan came from Mary Astell. This was a matured scheme. Her college was to be a sort of conventual retreat without vows and with an emphasis on the intellectual as well as the religious life. Publicity, college honors, degrees, were not thought of. There were to be no required studies, nor does she suggest even an orderly progression of lectures. The heterogeneous character of her proposed clientèle forbade any rigidity of plan. Mary Astell seems to have looked about her and found many women to whom the customary régime offered no satisfactory place. There were widows who did not choose remarriage, spinsters unwelcome in the homes allotted them by kinship, girls with dowries too slender to make an advantageous marriage probable, young heiresses subject to the too adventurous pursuit of impecunious lovers and so in need of a haven pending marriage. All these uncoördinated needs were to be met by the new institution. The plan was to provide agreeable surroundings wherein women could tranquilly and without hostile criticism work out their own salvation. Practical beneficence, teaching, study in various realms, religious meditation, were the avenues open to individual choice. To the women who remained permanently in the college a life of dignified achievement was possible. Upon the young women who were destined to be wives and mothers in important homes would be exerted an influence tending to ennoble them in their domestic relations, and the learning they had gained would prove a resource amidst the distractions and trials of life. The plan included too much, and the adjustments rendered necessary by its captivating flexibility would have taxed any organizer to the utmost. Perhaps it is as well that the scheme was not put to the test of practice. Mary Astell's contribution was in the idea she set forth and in her eloquent defense of that idea.

It is surprising that Defoe's plan for a woman's college

should have been coincident with Mary Astell's, yet independent of it. Defoe's fertile imagination creates curious buildings in which to house his Academy. He evidently considers Mary Astell's plan as too loose in general structure and too religious in tone to be practicable. He narrows his work down to such studies as are given in public schools.

After Defoe we hear of no further plans for higher education. But the idea lingered in the minds of many. Richardson in *Clarissa Harlowe* suggests such an institution, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu says that it was her youthful ambition to be foundress of a college. In Mrs. Centlivre's *Basset Table* the learned young Valeria is advised to found a woman's college in which the pupils shall be called "Valerians." The most curious and interesting embodiment of the scheme was that by Thomas Amory. The fullness and realistic precision of detail in his account of the "Hertfordshire Religious Retirement" were such as to make his heroine, the foundress, accepted as an historical personage. The fictitious narrative is, however, of especial significance as showing the persistence of Mary Astell's abortive plan.

In complete harmony with these various schemes for giving women greater intellectual freedom was the attitude in many private homes. It is quite surprising to discover how many studious girls had a favorable home environment. Elizabeth Jocelyn's grandfather, a distinguished bishop, conducted her studies. Mary North's father "fostered her little assemblage of female *literati*." Lady Pakington was taught by the learned Sir Norton Knatchbull. Lucy Apsley's father spurred her on to outdo her brothers in Latin, and Mr. Hutchinson fell in love with her for her poetry and learning. Dudleya North had the same teachers and studies as her brothers until they went to the University. Damaris Cudworth's mind was her father's joy and pride and Locke was her tutor. Bishop Burnet provided for his daughter Mary all possible opportunities in books and art. John Evelyn cherished the intellectual tastes of his daughter and showed her writings and paintings with pride. Anne

Baynard, Anna Hume, Elizabeth Singer, were girls whose early literary tendencies found paternal approval and aid. William Elstob gave fullest sympathy and guidance to his ambitious young sister, the *indefessa comes* of his studies. And Elizabeth Carter's intellectual needs ruled the household.

These protected home studies were not unlike the opportunities offered girls in Tudor times and had the same disadvantages. There were no ordered courses of study. The depths and shallows of a girl's learning were largely dependent on the tastes of her father or tutor. She entered upon such a line of work as offered itself, prepared herself for it as she went along, and achieved what she could. As compensations for a training so desultory were the concentration and zest of the work, the undisciplined ardor of the pioneer, contact with great books and men of well-seasoned learning.

It is important to note that these scattered homes where the daughter found herself free to develop learned tastes were doubtless more numerous than is at first apparent. We know of a few such homes because of chance published records. But there must have been many homes where the lettered leisure such as we find in the Evelyn family, in Lord Winchilsea's at Eastwell, and in Archbishop Secker's at Canterbury, was shared in to the fullest extent by the ladies of the household. No daughter of the family might attain to notice as a writer, but the result of such reading and thinking would be a high level of general intelligence which might, in the mass, be of more significance than authorship.

More important still as indicative of a new era is the favor accorded learned women by many men of high standing. The adulation given the Duchess of Newcastle may have been inspired by her rank and wealth, but Jeremy Taylor, Cowley, and the Earl of Roscommon had no such reason for their homage to Orinda. The clergymen who gathered at Lady Pakington's rejoiced in her great learning. Dryden gave to Anne Killigrew such praise as awaits few poets and artists. The Norths gave honorable public recognition of Dudleya North's remarkable

linguistic attainments. The family circle at Eastwell applauded Lady Winchilsea's poems. Mrs. Blackwell's work received formal recognition from the most learned doctors of the day. Of the early novel-writers Richardson is so well recognized as the sex's champion, and as the champion of learned ladies in particular, that his services need no further emphasis. Fielding's satirical picture of Mrs. Western ends with the conclusion that "petticoats should not meddle," but he more than turns the scale by the opinions he expresses in the Prefaces to his sister's books. Most men of ability preferred as companions women of good minds and a fair stock of ideas. Even Bishop Burnet, while afraid of general education, praises the intellectual endowment and learned attainments of each of his three wives. And Swift, though contemptuous of the race of women, for close comradeship chose Stella, a woman of wit, sense, and learning, in preference to some one of the doll or clinging-vine type. And his amiability, though rather too condescending, towards various literary ladies, may in part offset his brutal general statements. The fact is, nearly every woman of learned or literary attainments was accorded praise — even an undue meed of praise — from her immediate circle and from at least a few of her distinguished contemporaries.

Furthermore, publication of worthy work was made a matter of urgency. Dr. Hickes did all in his power to bring Elizabeth Elstob's Anglo-Saxon work before the learned public of his day, and it was he who insisted on the publication of Susanna Hopton's letters. Lady Masham's *Letters of the Love of God* were brought out only on the insistence of John Norris. Mrs. Cockburn's early philosophical writings received immediate praise from Bishop Burnet, John Norris, and John Locke. But for Archbishop Secker Miss Carter's *Epictetus* would have remained in manuscript. It was through Bishop Burnet's insistence that his wife's *Meditations* were published.

And still one more debt must be recorded, for some of the most important books in behalf of women were written by men. From Gerbier to Ballard the list is an interesting one. No

woman ventured on statements so astounding as those which Poulain de la Barre deduced from his fundamental assumption of the equality of the sexes. His arguments may have been but an academic pushing of a principle to its logical conclusion, or his book may even have been satirical in intent, but the English translation was evidently made in all seriousness and served as a basis for "Sophia's" most audacious claims. Specific attempts to bring female genius into knowledge and repute were by men. John Duncomb's *Feminead* in 1751 leads the list, and before 1760 we have the *Poems by Eminent Ladies* of Bonnell and Thornton, the *Lives* by Theophilus Cibber, the exaltation of learned women in *John Buncle*, and, chief of all, the monumental work by George Ballard.

In summary it seems fair to say that while there was a general opinion adverse to the learning of women and suspicious of it, there were yet many men who seriously held views that would not sound antiquated in any modern defense of the higher education of women.

Education in relation to the Church

In all the discussions of plans for the intellectual training of women two suggestive limitations are to be noted. One is that nearly all men and women who favored the higher education did so because of the advantage it would be to the Church. The Quakers recognized the right of women to speak in public because they believed such action authorized by the Scriptures, but the freedom so granted did not go beyond religious topics. Susanna Wesley's ministry to her husband's parishioners was excusable only because her teaching was in the service of the Church. And the clergymen of high rank who favored learned women did so because the piety of these women would probably prove more advantageous if it were trained. Even Ballard put extra emphasis on the ladies who read the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek. And it was probably ethical rather than literary standards that precluded any mention in his record of women such as Mrs. Behn, Mrs. Manley, and Mrs. Haywood. In all Ballard's many pages I do not recall even a hint that his learned

ladies could be accused of any irregularities of life or doctrine. And it is because women are naturally devout that Amory chooses learned young ladies to expound his new religion.

The basis of Bishop Burnet's objection to Mary Astell's college was that a body of women thus set apart for learning might conceivably prove inimical to the Church. The isolated learned lady under the charge of some wise husband or father could presumably be guided in right paths or suppressed. But who could give bonds for a college of learned women? It was the attitude towards the Church that turned the scale against or in favor of higher education. In point of fact, no woman — not even the most profligate — wrote against religion. On the contrary, all women of letters — even the most profligate — wrote in favor of religion. Genuinely, or as a matter of convention, they all upheld virtue and the authority of the Church.

Outcome of education not foreseen

A second limitation is that the ultimate outcome of any greatly increased intellectual freedom for women was but dimly descried. If women were permitted to pursue learning into remote fastnesses, if they were allowed to thread their difficult way through the entanglements of philosophical disputations, if they were encouraged to look out upon the follies of life with satiric or reformatory intent, further steps in independence would seem an inevitable sequence. But such steps were not only not taken, they were not even foreseen. Nor did the most advanced men and women make any claims extending beyond the freedom to read, write, and think according to their own desires. Home duties and relationships remained unchanged. Bathsua Makin said that higher education was not designed to make wives self-assertive, but more reasonably and intelligently submissive. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Mary Astell, the two most advanced and independent women of their day, are at one with the theory of the divinely ordained headship of man. Their bitterness of tone contains no thought of change, no hint of rebellion. Women were still under the dominion of fathers and husbands. The difference was that these fathers and

husbands were in numerous instances willing to accord a very much enlarged freedom. But the next step was not taken by virtue of which the final right of decision as to her own thought and action would have belonged to the woman herself.

There was, furthermore, no claim made by women for any part in public life. Mary Wollstonecraft's suffrage programme of 1791, mild as it was, would have seemed to Mary Astell an incredible overturning of feminine ideals. Mary Astell and her congeners could not see that the putting of educational weapons into the hands of women was a concession carrying with it all later demands of feminism. The advocates of higher education for women were blind to the potentialities of the situation. There was no immediate following-up of theory into action. The idea of woman as a self-sufficing, self-directing individuality, responsible for her own destiny, and capable of playing an important part in civic and national affairs, did not come into clear outline until two centuries after Mary Astell's pronunciamento. In the period before 1760 we become aware of a moving on the waters. We are conscious of a great stir of preparation as for a crisis. Many paths converge towards one goal, but no goal is reached. Plans and achievements and favorable utterances seem to halt in mid-air.

A detailed study of the various ways in which women sought for fuller and richer intellectual life shows in what isolation they worked, with what lack of leadership, with what a depressing sense of the futility of their uncoördinated efforts. The beginnings of the new ideals for women were so modest and unassuming, so casual, so without self-consciousness, that at the time they could hardly be recognized as beginnings. Evidences of a new vitality appear in the retrospect as numerous and promising, but in reality each thinker of new thoughts stood out alone, a solitary champion, scarcely realizing that in other parts of the field other champions were fighting under the same banners. We can now bring together many rather advanced statements in favor of educating girls. But these were often mere passing

isolated utterances. There was nothing like an organized propaganda, no body of public opinion growing steadily in mass and power till it became dominant. There are hundreds of blades pushing up through the dark earth, but the field is never quite ripe for harvest. There is so much reasoning, so much able thought, so much sincerity of feeling and aspiration, and there are so many women reaching out into new mental realms, that a decisive revolution of opinion seems often imminent. But the world listens unconvinced, and in the actual affairs of life apparently applies the old standards.

What was actually accomplished in the century before 1760 was a lavish sowing of seed, a steady infiltration of new ideas, a breaking up of old certainties as to woman's place in domestic and civic life, and an accumulation of examples proving women capable of the most varied intellectual aptitudes and energies.

THE END

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